

Commenced this week, "The Surf Angel: or, The Hermit of the Reefs," by Col. Prentiss Ingraham.

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No. 122.



The Comanches were all about him, and, drawing his revolver, he blazed away right and left, in their very faces.

LIGHTNING JO; OR, The Terror of the Santa Fe Trail.

A TALE OF THE PRESENT DAY.

BY CAPT. J. F. C. ADAMS,

Author of "Old Grizzly, the Bear-Tamer," "The Phantom Princess," etc.

CHAPTER VI.

LIGHTNING JO IN A SCRIMMAGE.

Yess; Lightning Jo found that the Comanches were coming, and at a rather rapid rate, too. There was no flinching himself over the side of his mustang and making him a shield against the blows of the redskins, for the latter were on every side of him. The fact was they had recognized that peculiar yell of his, and hastily laid their plans to make him prisoner.

But Jo wasn't made a prisoner yet, by a long shot, and finding that he was at a disadvantage on the back of his steed, he quietly slipped off, looping his rifle by a contrivance of his own to his side, he whipped out a couple of revolvers, one in either hand, and the fun began on the instant.

It wasn't the way of Jo to await the opening of a game like this, but to open it himself, and the instant he could cock the handy little weapons, he began popping away right and left, the astounded Comanches going down like ten-pins before the savage "bull-dogs," who had a way of biting every time they gave utterance to a bark. But there were but ten such "bites" available, and carefully as the scout husbanded his ammunition, the barrels were speedily emptied without any sensible diminution of his peril.

There was no one Comanche, nor no single half-dozen of them, that would have believed it possible to secure possession of Lightning Jo, and so they went into the scrimmage in such overwhelming numbers that escape upon his part looked impossible. By the time the barrels of his revolvers were emptied there were fully fifty Indians surrounding him. Nearly, if not quite all of them, were mounted, and they were not the men to show mercy to such a character as Lightning Jo, who had worked more mischief against the tribe than any dozen frontiersmen with whom they had exchanged shots.

Had this indomitable scout been alone upon the prairie, his fighting would undoubtedly have been of the most terrific nature, and he would have died, like Colonel Crockett at the Alamo, with an "army of dead

him; but with all of Jo's wonderful prowess, he saw that the assistance of his friends was needed, and without any hesitation he gave utterance to his "call," which reached the ears of his listening cavalymen, who were equally prompt in responding to the cry.

But the time that must elapse between the call and the arrival of reinforcements, short as it was, was all-sufficient for the Comanches to encompass the death of a dozen antagonists, unless they were checked by a most stubborn and skillful resistance.

And just that resistance and that fight now took place.

Instead of clubbing his rifle and using the weapon in that shape, as almost any man would have done, Jo now had recourse to that wonderful science in which he was such an adept, demonstrating that to such a man there is no weapon at his command like the naked fist.

It was a treat to see him use his powers, and had he only possessed a rock or wall to back against, so as to prevent an insidious approach from behind, he could have kept off the Comanche nation, so long as they lunged up to him in such a blind, headlong fashion as the present.

The posture taken by Lightning Jo was according to the latest "rules of the London prize ring," and consisted in having his arms up in front of him, the left slightly in advance, while he balanced himself upon his left foot, so poised that he was "firm on his pins," or ready to leap backward or forward, as necessity demanded.

The foremost Comanche, who had dismounted, was almost up to Jo, when he thought somebody's mustang had kicked him fairly in the face, and he made three back summersets before he could put the brake on. And then, just as he was getting up, he was knocked down again by a couple of his comrades going over him, and then, as those arms began working like piston-rod, and with a velocity of a hundred times as great, the cracking of heads was something like the going off of a pack of Chinese crackers ignited together.

Heads were down and heels up, as the redskins leaped from the backs of their animals and charged in upon the scout, who, as cool as when partaking of a leisurely meal, allowed every one to come just within reach of his iron knuckles, when he let drive like a cannon shot.

Finding that it was impossible to take him afoot, several of the redskins attempted to ride him down; but there was something in his appearance as he thus acted on the defensive that prevented them from approaching too close, just as the bravest horse will recoil from the bear when he faces about.

Then, too, as it became apparent that there was no capturing the scout in front, the Indians exerted themselves to the utmost to steal around in his rear, and to fling him to the ground. This kept things lively for the time, and the way Lightning Jo spun around and danced upon his legs, striking incessantly, and occasionally putting in a terrific kick now and then, was a marvel in itself.

Now he seemed to be down and out of sight, but the next instant he popped up from some other point, and sent in a volley of blows with the same lightning-like force and skill. The Indian that clutched at him and was certain he had got him, clutched the empty air, and did get, along the head, in such a way that he ever after held him in the most vivid remembrance.

All this was thrilling and, in a certain sense, amusing; but after all, despite the extraordinary skill and quickness displayed by the scout, it could not really extricate him from the difficulty. A man has but two arms with which to guard himself, and when he is pressed from every point, with an increasing pressure, no human being can keep such a swarm at a distance. He is like the man set upon by thousands of rats.

Furthermore, although Jo knew that his friends were making all haste to his rescue, yet he saw things could not remain as they were even until then.

He therefore determined to make a desperate attempt to break through the surrounding lines.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ANGEL OF THE PRAIRIE.

In the awful sufferings to which communities and companies are sometimes doomed, it is often found that the most delicate and refined females display the greatest fortitude and the truest heroism. When the terrible calamity came upon Captain Shields and his party, it was generally supposed that the first to succumb, from sheer terror alone, would be the frail, blue-eyed, laughing Lizzie Manning, whose gentleness of heart, and mirthful ways, had won the affections of all, before the journey from St. Louis was fairly begun.

There was a blanching of the damask cheek, a faint scream of fear, when the

half-naked Comanches suddenly burst forth to view, and sent in their first volley, and she scrambled nimbly into the "fort," as the refuge wagon was termed, thoughtful enough, however, to be the very last one to enter. By the time she had taken her place upon the straw-covered floor upon the bottom, her courage had returned to her, or more properly speaking, she rose to the situation, and displayed a lofty courage and a rare good sense that excited the wonder and compelled the admiration of all.

By her aid, the screaming, terrified children were speedily quieted, and the scarcely less frantic mothers were made to realize that their only safety lay in retaining their self-possession, and keeping themselves and their children out of range of the rifle-balls that were clipping the canvas covering of the wagon, and burying themselves in the planking all about them. By this means something like order was obtained in the crowded little party, and they had nothing to do but to watch furtively the fighting going on all around them, to look at the horrid Comanches circling back and forth, with those wonderful contortions upon their horses, to see their frightful grimaces, and the flash of their rifles almost in their very faces, as they seemed to be rushing down as if about to overwhelm and crush the little party out of existence.

It was a thrilling sight that they looked upon, as they saw these Indians pitching headlong from their saddles; but their hearts were wrung with anguish as they saw more than one of their own number fall, some at full length beneath the wagons, and others among the floundering horses, where their deaths were frequently hastened by the hoofs of the frantic animals.

Suddenly Lizzie Manning sprang from the wagon, and heedless of the hurtling bullets, started to run across the open space inclosed by the irregular circle of wagons. She had taken but a few steps, when a young man dashed out from the rear of one of the lumbering wagons, and excitedly waved her back.

"For Heaven's sake, Lizzie, back this instant!" he called out, walking rapidly toward her in his anxiety; "it is sure death to advance. Wait not a second!"

She paused, as if the voice had a familiar sound, and stared in a bewildered way at the speaker, a fine, manly-looking young fellow, whose hair was blown about his face, and whose pale countenance and flashing eyes showed that he appreciated the danger, and had the courage not to flinch before it.

Only for a moment did the young maiden pause, and then (only a few feet separating them, as he had continued advancing from the first) she pointed to the prostrate figure of a man beneath one of the wagons.

"There is Harrison, who has been so kind to me, ever since we started—he fell just now, and stretched out his arms for help. I must go to him."

"He is past all help," said the man, solemnly, "and you will only lose your own life if you venture near him, for he took one of the most dangerous posts of all."

"Nevertheless, he may be alive, and I may be of help to him."

And as she spoke, the maiden hurried on to where the prostrate and now silent figure of one of her defenders lay. The distance was short, but as Egbert Rodman had declared, it was encompassed with death; and for one moment he meditated seizing the arm of the girl, and compelling her by main force to return to the shelter of the wagon; but something in her manner and appearance restrained him; and, forgetful of his own peril, he gazed with an awed feeling, as he would have watched the tread of an angel upon this sinful earth of ours.

With a somewhat rapid tread, but without any undue haste, and certainly without any fear, Lizzie advanced straight to the wagon where the poor fellow lay, flat upon his back, and directly between the wheels, motionless and with one knee drawn up, as if asleep.

Kneeling down, she took the hand still warm in her own, and with the other brushed back the dank hair from the forehead of the man, and asked, in that wonderfully sweet voice of hers:

"Oh, Mr. Harrison, is there nothing I can do for you?"

He opened his eyes, and looked at her with a dim wildness, his face ashy pale, and then something like a smile lit up his ghastly features, as he pointed to his breast.

"My wife—my babe—darling Nelly—"

She understood him, and drew from his breast-pocket a photograph of his wife—with a rosy-cheeked, smiling cherub of a little girl, laughing beside her knee.

"Tell them—my last thoughts—my last prayers were of them—"

"I will—I will," said the girl. "Is there nothing more I can do—?"

He made an effort to speak, but the words were choked in their utterance, and with his eyes fixed upon hers, he died without a struggle.

But that one soulful, grateful look of those dark eyes, as they faded out in death, amply repaid the brave-hearted Lizzie Manning for the noble deed she had done, and she rose to her feet, glad that she had heeded the mute call of the dying man, who could have scarcely hoped, at such a time and under such circumstances, any heed would have been paid to it, unless it were the mocking taunts of the merciless Comanches.

CHAPTER VIII.
A DARING DEED.

In the mean time, the battle was raging with infernal hotness. All of Captain Shields' party were merrily marking time, and they were so accustomed to the most desperate contests with the red-skins, that despite the terrible strain in which they were placed, they preserved their coolness and equanimity like true veterans, and loaded and fired with such rapid sureness, that to this alone may be attributed the severe check, which kept the Comanches from making an overwhelming charge, that would have carried every thing before them.

The first night passed with little disturbance, as we have already shown, and the second day the battle was renewed and kept up with scarcely an intermission until night-fall.

This day, especially the latter portion, was very warm, and the suffering of the little band was terrible—so much so that many of the living envied the dead, who had been so speedily released from their distress. The thirst felt by all was a perpetual torment, from which there was scarcely the slightest relief. Many of the men, despite the great danger, dug into the ground, until the damp soil was reached, which they scooped up and placed in their mouths as a slight assuagement of their anguish.

The females stood the trial like martyrs, for their own greatest suffering was that of seeing the half-dozen moaning children piteously begging for water, when there was none to give them.

The history of the world has proven that men will run any risk, no matter what, for the sake of satisfying the maddening thirst, that threatens to drive them raving wild; and it was this that was the cause of one of the most daring deeds ever recorded, upon the part of young Egbert Rodman, of whom mention was made in the preceding chapter.

The Comanches could not but be aware of this fearful distress of the whites, and with a fiendish malignity, characteristic of the Indian race, just at nightfall, when the Dead Man's Gulch was bathed in mellow twilight, one of the red-skins was seen to leap off his mustang and walk toward the encampment, with a large tin canteen in his hand—a relic undoubtedly of some massacre of United States soldiers.

There was a lull in the firing at this moment, and the whites, at a loss to understand the meaning of the proceeding, stealthily peered out from their coverings in the wagons, to learn what new trick was on the tapis.

It looked as if he were going to summon them to surrender, or call for a parley, as he walked straight forward until he was within a hundred feet of the nearest wagon, when he paused and held up the canteen before him, contorting his face into the most grotesque grimaces, and shaking the vessel in front and over his head.

The stillness at this moment was so profound, that more than one distinctly heard the gurgle of water in the vessel, and, if any doubt remained of the red-skin's purpose, it was dissipated by his calling out, in broken English:

"Yengese—come—muchee drink—hab muchee drink—"

These words were scarcely uttered, when crack, crack went two rifles almost simultaneously, and the foolhardy wretch made a scrambling leap, and his taunting words ended in a wild howl, as he fell prostrate across the can, that he had brandished so tormentingly in the faces of the sufferers.

It was strange that such a dog should not have known the risk he ran in making such a taunt.

The Indian had scarcely fallen when several of his comrades started down the declivity to bring away his body. At the same moment, Egbert Rodman, who was in one of the wagons, sprung out, and was seen to run at full speed in the direction of the fallen man.

"Come back! come back! or you're a dead man!" shouted Captain Shields, divining his purpose on the instant.

But the young man's lips were set, and he was determined upon possessing that canteen, if it were within the range of human possibility. He saw a horde of Comanches swarming down the gulch on a full run, screaming like demons, and evidently certain of securing the daring Yengese, whose torturing thirst had stolen away his senses.

But Egbert was not to be deterred by any such appalling danger as this. Now that he had undertaken the desperate task, nothing but death should turn him aside!

In far less time than it requires to be narrated, he had sped over the intervening ground, and was at the prostrate figure. He was fleet of foot, and he ran as he never ran before, reaching it, however, only a few seconds in advance of the rescuing Comanches, one of whom actually fired and missed him, when scarcely a rod in advance.

One tremendous jerk of his arm, and Egbert threw the dead Indian off the canteen, and catching it up in his hand, he turned about and started for the same bounding speed for the encampment, clinging to the vessel as if it was his own life; but the Comanches were all about him, and it looked as if it was all up, when he whipped out his only weapon—his revolver, and blazed away right and left in their very faces. At the same instant the whites opened fire, and made such havoc, that in the confusion Egbert made a dash, and sped like a reindeer for the wagons, and leaped in behind them with the canteen and the water and himself intact.

Then a shout went up from within the little band, and making his way to the central wagon, Egbert first furnished the moaning children with several swallows of the delicious—(oh, how delicious!) fluid, no inducement suffering Lizzie Manning to take a drop, until all her companions had first done so.

Then the brave fellow made his way from man to man, every one partaking of the soul-reviving cold water, whose delicious taste could not have been approached by the "nectar of the gods."

All drank moderately, for they knew that Egbert was to come last, and nothing could induce one to cut his allowance short; and so he let several swallows gurgle down his parched throat, when he carried the remainder to the women's wagon, and placing it in the hands of Lizzie, said:

"Keep it for the poor suffering little ones and for yourselves. We are hardy men, and can stand thirst better than they, and know how to chew our bullets, when we have nothing else."

With many a fervent blessing upon the noble fellow's head, the canteen was accepted and preserved as he requested.

CHAPTER IX.
THE LOVERS.

The second night the faint moon, that rode high on the sky, enabled the little party of white men in Dead Man's Gulch to detect the Comanches as they prowled about, and our friends proved their vigilance by picking off every one who thus exposed himself to their deadly rifles.

For the first half of the night little rest was obtained by either side—the spitting shots continuing with a rapidity, and in such numbers, as sometimes to resemble platoon firing—but shortly past the turn of night, the Comanches seemed to grow weary of the incessant din, and being a fair target for the whites so long as they remained on the hill, where they were brought in fair relief against the sky, they assumed safer positions, and for a long time perfect silence remained.

By this time, despite the respite afforded by the captured canteen, the condition of the party was as desperate as it could be. Although the whites had been very careful in exposing themselves to the aim of the Comanches, yet so deadly had it been that there were now only ten men left, including Gibbons. Shortly after midnight two of these made the attempt to steal through the envolving lines, and both lost their lives, in the manner recorded elsewhere. This left but eight able-bodied men to continue the defense, and Gibbons began arranging his flight with Shields, they keeping it a secret from the rest, as it was feared that there would be a strife as to who should go, every one being anxious to get out of such a hell as Dead Man's Gulch by any means, so long as a suitable pretext could be found.

But one horse was left unharmed. The others were dead, stretched in different places around the open space, and under the warm sun, an odor of the most offensive character was beginning to rise from them. Worse still, there were men here and there, and some of them in wagons, to whom the right of sepulture could not be given; and they lay, with dark, discolored faces, staring up to the sky, happier than were those who were left behind to struggle and fight on, only to die at last a still more dreadful death than had come to them.

All was still, and in the large wagon, devoted to the shelter of the women and children, the latter were sound asleep, as were most of the former. Lizzie Manning had endeavored to inspire hope in the despairing ones around her, and was now sitting, with folded hands, upon a blanket, her shawl gathered over her shoulders, and in that attitude was awaiting sleep, when she heard a faint footstep near her, and turning her head, described the figure of Egbert Rodman advancing with a hesitating step, in that direction, his actions indicating that he felt considerable doubt as to the propriety of that which he was doing.

Believing that he was seeking an opportunity to say something to her, Lizzie spoke to him in a low, reassuring voice.

"Well, Egbert, is it I that you wish to see? If so, come nearer, where your voice will not be so likely to be heard."

"I was wondering whether you were asleep or not," he replied, making his way to the rear of the wagon, where her face could be seen looking encouragingly out upon him. "There is no fighting going on at present; it won't do for one to go to sleep, and I was thinking that possibly you might be awake, and with no ability to close your eyes in slumber. But, if you have, don't fail to say so, and I will wait until to-morrow, or until there is a more favorable opportunity."

"You need not leave, Egbert," said she. "I did not sleep a single minute last night, nor can I do so to-night. I am glad that you have come, that we may have a chat with each other, without disturbing any one else. Somehow or other, I feel a strong conviction that this is the last night that will be spent in the gulch."

Egbert had thought the same for hours, but he had kept his premonitions to himself, and it cut him to the heart when the gentle and ordinarily light-hearted girl spoke of it in such positive and hopeless tones.

Yet nothing was to be gained by denying the existence of such a desperate strait.

"It does look so, indeed," he replied, in a low voice, as he leaned against the wagon in such a posture that his head was brought close to hers. "It is not likely that any diversion will be created in our favor, and we can not keep up a successful resistance much longer. Our numbers are getting too small."

"I hope they will end this struggle by firing into and killing us all together," returned Lizzie, in her sad, sweet tones, and her heart gave a great throb as she reflected upon the fate of falling into the hands of these tiger-like Comanches. "Do you not think they will do so, Egbert?"

He could not answer in the affirmative, so he did the best thing possible, making answer:

"You know that we shall keep up the fighting as long as any of us are left. When our men become weary, or are nearly all gone, the women can take their places, and thus compel the death which I know would be welcome to all."

"Well, Egbert," said she, in tones of Christian resignation, "it is only a step between this and the other life. Father and mother and sisters and brothers will mourn when they learn of the death that Lizzie died, but then she has only gone on before—just ahead of them."

"Yes," replied the young lover, who felt soothed, albeit saddened, by the words of the sweet girl. Reaching up his hand, he took that of hers, and with a solemn, sacred feeling, said:

"I suppose, Lizzie, now that we stand in the presence of death, you will permit me to declare how I loved you the first time I saw you in St. Louis, and how that love has increased and deepened with every hour since, until I feel now, like the romantic cavaliers of old, that it is sweet to stand here, and to die, knowing that I die defending your honor and your life. Lizzie, my own dearest one, you have all my heart. None who have seen you can fail to respect your sweetness of character, and the veriest slave was never held a more helpless captive by his task-master than I am by you. It would be idle for me to expect any thing like a similar emotion upon your part, but I am sure you will not be offended at what I have said. Tell me that."

"No; I am not—"

Egbert felt the hand tremble in his own, and a strange yearning came over him to hear what she had checked herself in saying. Could it be that she felt in any degree the same emotion that penetrated his whole

being? No, impossible; and yet what meant this trembling, this agitation, this excitement?

But she said not the words he was so anxious to hear, and they talked awhile longer upon the desperate situation, and then, kissing the dear hand that he had fondled and held imprisoned in his own, he bade her good-night, and returned to his post of duty.

CHAPTER X.
AT FULL SPEED.

All through this singular fight, Lightning Jo had kept within reach of his mustang, which occasionally put in a kick now and then, the hope that he might be turned to account; but the tumult and uproar became so terrific, that he finally became panic-stricken, and with a whinny of the wildest terror, he made a plunge among the scarcely-less excited animals, when his furious struggles added to the fearful uproar, which was already sufficient to drive an ordinary man out of his senses.

Lightning Jo, as we have said, knew that his friends were coming over the hills at the topmost of their speed; but the flight of his horse, and the rapid closing in of the Comanches, made further delay fatal, and with the promptness that was a peculiar characteristic of the man, he grasped his loaded rifle in his hands, and made his desperate struggle for freedom.

This was simply an attempt to dodge beneath the horses' bellies out beyond them, where he knew his own fleetness could be depended on to carry him safely into the company of his own men.

And now began a most extraordinary performance, and an exhibition of Lightning Jo's marvellous quickness of movement was given, such as would seem incredible in a description like ours. He was walled in on every hand by the swarming Comanches, but by the matchless use of his tremendous arms, he kept back the scores from entangling him in their embrace; until, all at once, he was seen to make a leap upward, directly over the shoulders of those immediately surrounding, and he shot beneath the belly of the nearest mustang like a whizzing rocket.

And, as he did so, he gave utterance to that strange yell of his, like the yelping prairie-dog, whose bark is cut short, as he plunges headlong into his hole, by the sudden whistling of his head out of sight.

The Comanches who caught the dissolving view of the scout, made a desperate struggle to capture him, and those who were still mounted, and saw him leaping beneath their animals, turned aside, and cut, slashed and thrust at him in the most pitiful fashion, while others sprang off their horses, and did their utmost to intercept and cut him off, or to trip him to the earth, or to disable him in some way that would prevent his succeeding in his threatened escape from their clutches.

It would be a vain attempt to follow his movements in the way of description, when the eye itself was unable to do so; and, despite the astonishing celerity of the Comanches, whose nimbleness of movement is proverbial in the West, they were completely baffled in every effort they made to entrap him.

Here, there, everywhere, he was seen, shooting out sometimes from between a horse's legs, and then was in another place before the animal could resent the shock given him—in front—in the rear—leaping to one side—backward—forward—and threw the whole troop into confusion—every now and then giving utterance to that indescribable yell, so that the red-skins were actually in a state of *flou*—and all the time steadily approaching the outer circle of mustangs, and ever keeping in mind the proper direction for him to follow, to meet the much-needed soldiers.

And all this took place in one-tenth the time required in our references. The bewildering dodging and doubling of Lightning Jo continued until he shot from beneath the last horse, and then with a triumphant screech, he sped away like a terrified antelope.

Witnessing the efforts of the Comanches had been directed toward capturing the redoubtable scout, and they soon dashed their animals after him on a full run, in the hope of riding him down before he could reach the assistance which they knew was so close at hand.

It proved closer indeed than they suspected; for they had hardly started upon the fierce pursuit when a rattling discharge of rifles rose above the din and confusion, just as the whole company of United States cavalry thundered over the ridge, and came down upon them like the sweep of a tornado that carries every thing before it.

There were a few exchanges of shots, and then the Comanches would have excited the admiration of a troop of Centaurs by their display of horsemanship. Speeding forward like a whirlwind, the shock of the opposing bodies seemed certain to be like that of an earthquake; but, at the very instant of striking, every Indian shied off, either to the right or the left, and by a quick, rapid stroke of their well-trained animals, they shot away beyond reach of harm from the cavalry, and skurried away over the hills and ridges, disappearing from view with the same astonishing quickness, that made successful pursuit out of the question.

Driven away in this unceremonious fashion, the Comanches were compelled to leave their dead upon the field—the wounded managing to take care of themselves, and to get out of harm's way, ere the cavalry could swoop down upon them. The fashion of giving quarter, in the contests between the Indians and white men, has never been very popular, and at the present day, it may be considered practically obsolete, so that the Comanches displayed only ordinary discretion in "getting up and getting"—if we may be permitted to use the expressive language of the West itself, in referring to an engagement of this kind.

Accustomed as were these men to the exhibitions of the wonderful powers of Lightning Jo, they were astounded at the exhibition of their own eyes, of the deeds he had done during the few minutes that he had engaged in the encounter with the red-skins. The troop gathered around the battle-field, and were commenting in their characteristic manner upon his exploits, when the scout himself, seeing his mustang near at hand, made haste to secure him, and leaping upon his back, he lost no time in placing himself at their lead, and turning his face toward Dead Man's Gulch, he said, in his sharp, peremptory way, when thoroughly in earnest:

"Come, boys, we have lost too much time. We must get there afore dark, if we git there at all."

Gibbons, the messenger, placed himself beside him, and, as soon as they were fairly under way, Jo remarked to him:

"I hardly know what to make of it. Old Swico is not with them skunks, and I am disappointed. It has a bad look."

"Why so?" inquired his comrade, who was partly prepared for the answer.

"I ain't sartin—but it looks to me as if the business is finished down at the Gulch."

"Then why should not the chief, released from there, be here with his men?" continued Gibbons.

"This is only a part of his men; there wa'n't many Comanches among the hills. I think the old dog sent them off on purpose to bother us and keep us back as much as they could."

"While Swico and the others have taken another direction?"

"Exactly, and carried the women and children with them; and if so, we might as well turn back to Fort Adams ag'in."

But the scout, as he uttered these chilling words, set his teeth, and rode his mustang harder than ever toward Dead Man's Gulch.

CHAPTER XI.
THE VALLEY OF DEATH.

The wagon containing the females and the children was that which carried the provisions—the others being piled up with the luggage belonging to the different members of the party, and which they had formed into rude barricades from which they fired out, with such deadly effect, upon the Comanches, who, from the nature of the case, were unable to make any kind of approach without exposing themselves to that same unerring fire.

One of the men, at stated periods, visited the provision wagon, and brought forth lunch for his comrades, who felt no suffering in that respect—their great trial being the lack of water. But for the providential supply, secured in the manner already narrated, human endurance would not have permitted the whites to have held out longer than the beginning of this terrible, and what was destined to prove the last, day—the one following the departure of Gibbons, the messenger for Fort Adams.

It should be made clear at this point also, that of the half-dozen women, and the same number of children, not one had husband, or father, or blood-relative among the defenders, so that, while their situation could scarcely have been more trying, it was deprived of the poignant anguish of seeing the members of their own household shot down in cold blood before their eyes.

No pen can depict the gratitude and love they felt for these men, who, it may be said, were giving up their lives to protect them, for at the first appearance of the dreaded Comanches, every one of them could have secured their safety by dashing away at full speed, upon their fleet-footed mustangs, and leaving the helpless ones to their fate.

But of such a fashion is not the Western borderer, who will go to certain death, rather than prove false to those who have been entrusted to his care. The party had been sent to St. Louis, under an agreement to bring this little company to their homes in Santa Fe, on their return from an excursion to the Eastern States, and there was not one of them who would have dared to ride into the beautiful Mexican town with the tidings that they had perished, and he had lived to tell the tale. Far better, a thousand times, that their bones should be left to bleach upon the prairie, rather than they should live to be forever disgraced and dishonored, and to carry an accusing conscience with them for the remainder of their days.

The children, during the first twenty-four hours, probably suffered the most, in their cramped, constrained position, being compelled to remain within the wagon, lest, if they exposed themselves by appearing upon the ground, they should be slain by the Comanches, who availed themselves of every opportunity to retaliate upon the whites.

After it became pretty certain that Jim Gibbons had penetrated and passed through the Comanche lines, Captain Shields prepared for a deadly charge from their enemies, and from his place in his vehicle he called to the others to make ready also.

The men thus talked with each other, while their faces were mutually invisible; but the little circle permitted the freest intercommunication. His advice was followed, and every rifle loaded and kept ready to be discharged at an instant's warning.

It was terribly annoying to feel, at a juncture like this, that they must husband their fire on account of the falling supply of ammunition, and at the same time manage the business in such a way that the Comanches themselves should not be permitted to discover the appalling truth.

"Don't fire too often," called the captain, in his cautious way, "and when you do, make sure that you let daylight through one of the red devils. I think they will open on us in some way, and very soon, too."

It seemed strange that the uproar and tumult which had marked the flight of Gibbons should be succeeded in its turn by such a profound silence as now rested upon the gulch. From the place where our friends crouched not a single Comanche could be seen, nor could their location be detected by the slightest sound.

From far away on the prairie came the faint sound of a rifle—but in the immediate vicinity all was still.

Captain Shields was of the opinion that Swico, the chief, had gathered his warriors around him, just outside the gulch, and was holding a consultation as to what was the best to be done, as it was now as good as certain that, before the dawn of another day, a heavy force of cavalry would be down upon them.

There were some who really believed that the Comanches would now draw off and disappear altogether from the place where they had suffered such a terrible repulse; but for this very reason, the experienced frontiersman, Captain Shields, was certain that the contrary would prove to be the case. The incitement of revenge would prompt them rather to make the most desperate charges and the most furious assaults upon the little Spartan band.

And while the old hunter lay upon his face in the wagon, stealthily peering out, and listening for the first approach of his foes, he coolly calculated the chances of the day.

"Six of us left, and we average three rifles apiece—to say nothing of revolvers that are scattered all among the boys. We can load and fire these, perhaps four or five times apiece—not often, certainly—that is, if we can only get the opportunity to

load and fire them. After that—Well, everybody has got to die some time."

At this, he stealthily moved around, and peered out at the wagon containing the helpless ones, and he muttered:

"All seems to be quiet there, and I guess none of them have been reached by these bullets whizzing all about them, which may be either good or bad fortune."

Then, as he resumed his position of guard, he cleared his vision with his hand, and added:

"It's mighty rough on them. We men are always expecting such things, and are sort of ready for it; but for helpless women and children—Hello! what in the name of Heaven can that be?"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 121.)

ROYAL KEENE,
THE
California Detective:
OR,
The Witches of New York.
A ROMANCE OF FOUR GIRLS' LIVES.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "OVERLAND KIT," "WOLF DEMON," "AGE OF SNADES," "RED MAZEPPA," ETC.

CHAPTER X.

BACK FROM THE ISLAND.

WATER STREET BY NIGHT. Not a very inviting locality, nor a very safe one for an unprotected stranger.

From the windows of a low, two-story brick house, painted a dingy green, the lights were shining brightly. The lower part of the house was fitted up as a saloon. It was a corner house, and on the side street all was dark. The front of the house alone was illuminated.

On the glass windows of the door "The Sailor's Rest" was inscribed in flaming red letters.

The saloon was not illly named, for, it reported spoke truth, many a poor Jack Tar had gone to his last home—to Davy's locker—under the dingy roof.

The police kept a wary eye upon the saloon and its inmates; and among the force the Sailor's Rest was reputed to be the worst house in the precinct. It was a harbor for thieves and bad characters of all descriptions.

When one of the Water-street gang was "wanted," to use the detective term, the Sailor's Rest was the first place visited.

The saloon was in full blast; the sound of the music came through the doors and windows, accompanied by the shuffle of heavy feet and the boisterous laughter of coarse voices.

The jolly Jack Tars and the woolen-shirted longshoremen, together with the nimble-fingered, shoulder-hitting roughs, and the faded sirens of the dance-house, were indulging in the delights of a jig or a sailor's hornpipe. Double-shuffles and pigeon-wings were in order, followed by frequent visits to the bar for liquid refreshments.

As we enter the dance-house and gaze upon the scene, the "fun" is at its height.

The saloon was well filled by a motley crew. Ten o'clock had just struck. A dance had just ended, and the couples were crowding around the bar, where a tall, saloon-faced man, with short black hair and thin side-whiskers, in his shirt-sleeves, was dealing out the fiery fluids which the thirsty dancers poured down their throats like so much water.

Just at the end of the bar, side by side with a burly sailor, whose face and build betrayed the Englishman, stood a slender, fragile girl, hardly more than a child in years. She was the best looking of all the girls in the room, but her thin face, the dark circles under her eyes, and the hectic flush which tinged her hollow cheek, told plainly that the dark angel, Death, had marked her for his own.

As the girl stood by the counter, a boy entered the saloon—a little fellow, dressed in ragged clothes, and with that peculiar expression of cunning upon his thin, sharp features which a life in the street soon gives to the poor little souls to whom fate has denied a home, and who gain their sustenance, like the outcast dogs and cats, out of the gutter.

The boy looked around for a moment with his sharp little eyes, then perceived the girl standing at the end of the bar.

Quietly he sidled up to her and pulled her by the skirt of the dress to attract her attention.

"What is it, Billy?" asked the girl, in a voice which had once been soft and musical, but was now harsh and thin.

The boy winked at her mysteriously.

She understood that he had something to say which he did not wish the sailor standing by her side to hear, so she bent down her head that he might whisper in her ear. The sailor, busy lighting a cigar, did not notice her movement.

"He's outside," whispered the boy.

"Who?" asked the girl, although she guessed full well who it was.

"Denny."

"Why don't he come in?"

"He's afraid of the police; his time ain't up on the Island yet," the boy answered.

"Does he want me?"

"Yes."

"Tell him I'll be out in a moment," the girl said, slowly.

The boy grinned, and retreated with his message.

The music struck up again for the dance. "Come along, old girl!" said the sailor, in his bluff, hearty way, offering his arm to her.

"I won't dance this time, thank you," the girl replied. "The room is so hot that it has made my head ache. I'm going out in the air for a few moments."

"But you'll come back again?"

"Yes," and with this assurance, the girl left the room.

Outside the door she found the boy waiting.

"He's just round the corner," the boy said.

The girl, bareheaded and thinly clad as she was, heeded not the chill night-air, but with hasty steps, passed round the corner of the building. There, concealed in the shadow of a door, stood a stoutly-built young fellow, dressed roughly, and with a dark slouched hat pulled down over his eyes. His face was of the bulldog type, and plainly showed the bully and the shoulder-hitter.

Denny King, or "Denny" King, as he was more commonly termed, was a good specimen of a large class who infest New

York. Occupation he had none. Thief, pickpocket or burglar he was not, professionally, although it is more than probable that, when hard pushed and no other avenue for wealth open, he would not hesitate to "go through" any stranger who looked worth it, whom he might chance to come across passing through his "stamping-ground" late at night.

We said that he had no occupation; we are in the wrong; he had one calling; he was a politician—one of those useful men who could render naught ten votes of the opposing party by voting ten times himself. A perfect king of "repeaters" was Denny, and of special value about election time. Not only useful as a voter, but also as a scarecrow to keep timid men away from the polls. For "Denny" was a professional fighter at times, when all other occupations failed him—a pugilist—one who toed the scratch within the "magic circle" marked by the stakes and ropes, and called, in the language of the sporting gentry, "the ring."

Denny was not only intimate with the political lights who owed their elections to him, and fellows of his kidney, but also with sundry great railroad kings who, in their squabble for power, had called upon the rough-and-ready shoulder-litters to assist them in seizing a railway office or in protecting their own from attacks by similar "gentlemen" hired by opposing parties.

So the strong-armed, quick-litting Denny was not without influential friends.

But ill luck will come to the best of men; every man has his dark hour, no matter who or what he may be; and so it came to pass that Denny, despite his political influence, was "sent up" to the Island for six months, for being concerned in a drunken row and using a knife too freely. If he had been a hard-working mechanic who had allowed liquor to get the best of him, he probably would have got a year or two in the State Prison at Sing Sing.

Justice is a wonderful thing sometimes, and the most wonderful justice in all the world is that dispensed in the great city of New York, when the prisoner happens to have either wealthy or political friends to back his quarrel.

As we have stated, Denny, the exponent of the "manly art of self-defense," used a knife when he became involved in a quarrel; and it is a most astonishing thing that, in nine cases out of ten, all the professional pugilists in a difficulty do the same, plainly showing that in reality they place but little reliance upon their "manly art" to protect them from harm.

So, for six months the places that once knew the respectable Denny were to know him no more. But, on the night of which we write, of the six months only one had gone, and yet the "Island" bird was free.

"Why didn't you come into the saloon, Denny?" asked the girl, a slight shiver passing over her as the chill night air caught her in its cold embrace.

"An' git sent back to the Island?" growled the rough, in his hoarse, brutal voice.

"Why, he there, danger of that?" asked the girl, anxiously.

"Of course, I've given the 'cops' leg bail. I wasn't a-goin' to break stone on the Island if there was a chance for to git off. So a couple of us fixed it with some friends of mine to lay off the Island in a boat. Then we fixed the guard an' slipped off. But, if any of the perlice that knows about my being sent up should put their peepers on me, I'd go back ag'in."

"You can't hide forever," the girl said, nervously, and shivering with cold.

"Some of the boys will square the job; election's coming on an' they'll need me," the bully replied, significantly. "But, in the first place, I want some money, for I'm broke."

"I haven't any."

"Then git some," responded Denny, coarsely. "Go for the old man. Johnny kin let you have some. It's a sin I think if a wife can't help her husband sometimes."

"Well, I'll try," the girl said, sadly.

"An' maybe I'll have some news for you in a week or so, if things work right. I think I'm the boy for to find out who your daddy an' mammy was."

"You don't mean it, Denny?" cried the girl, quickly.

"You bet I do; just 'stake' me, an' in a little while I'll square things."

"I'll be back in a moment."

Then the girl re-entered the saloon.

CHAPTER XI. THE STRANGER.

JENNIE—so the dance-house girl, the wife of the shoulder-litter was named—after entering the saloon went at once to the proprietor of the place, John Allen, who was leaning on the counter—idle just at that time, as the dancing had again commenced—watching the scene.

"Well, what is it, Jennie?" Allen asked, seeing the girl approach the counter and stand there as if in want of something.

"I want to ask a favor of you," the girl said, slowly.

"What is it?" The voice of the keeper of the dance-house was rough and hoarse, yet there was a tone of kindness in it when he addressed the girl.

"I want a little money if you can let me have it," the girl said, timidly.

"Well, you know that there ain't much coming to you?" Allen observed.

"Yes, I know that," the girl replied, quickly. "I want an advance, if you are willing to trust me."

"There ain't many in this room that I'd trust any further than I could see 'em," Allen said, bluntly; "but I guess you ain't one of that kind. Look here, Jen', what do you want this money for, and how much do you want?"

"I think ten dollars will do, if you can spare it," the girl said, evading the first question.

"Oh, no tricks on me; what do you want the money for?" The dance-house keeper was not easily deceived.

"Why, what difference does that make to you? what do you care what I do with the money as long as you are willing to give it to me?" the girl asked.

"Cos I don't want you to make a fool of yourself," Allen replied. "I know what's up, Denny's back from the Island, isn't he?"

"Why should you think so?" asked the girl, nervously.

"Oh, you can't pull the wool over my eyes. I know you too well. Denny has come back and comes to you for money as usual. Why, Jennie, you poor little fool, the best thing I could do for you would not be to give you the ten dollars at all, but go

to the nearest police station and set the 'cops' after that sucker you've married."

"You won't do that?" cried the girl, imploringly.

"No, I won't do it, of course, 'cos I never went back on a feller in my life, but it would be a good thing for you if I did," Allen said, in his blunt way. "See here, Jennie, I don't think I'll let you have this money. Won't do you any good nor him either; he'll only go and spend it for whiskey, then come home and abuse you."

"I can stand it, but please give me the money," the girl pleaded.

"I tell you you're a fool to give it to him," Allen growled, drawing a roll of bills out of his wallet and beginning to count out the money.

"I think that Denny will behave himself now; he hasn't been ugly with me for a long time. He said, too, that he thinks he will be able to find out who my parents were," Jennie said.

"It's all a 'plant' for to git money out of you, Jennie. He's lying and he knows he's lying. But, here's the money. If you choose to be a fool enough for to go and give it to him, why that's your look-out and not mine."

Allen handed over the money and the girl took it eagerly.

"I'm very much obliged," she said.

"Oh, that's all right," he answered.

"You're a good girl, but you let that loafer make a fool of you."

"He's my husband, you know," the girl said, timidly.

"Be a good thing for you if somebody'd stick a knife in him one of these dark nights," Allen growled, half to himself as the girl moved away. She did not hear his speech; she was thinking only of the fugitive from justice who waited outside.

A crash at the lower end of the room attracted the attention of the keeper of the dance-house.

A table had given way and came to the ground; the table had supported one of the great attractions of the Saloon's Rest—an Indian chief, who played upon the big drum.

The Indian was a brave of the Yankton Sioux tribe, who, in some mysterious way, had wandered from the plains of the far West to the great city of New York.

There he had fallen under the notice of the dance-house keeper, and he had induced the Indian, by the promise of unlimited whiskey, to take up his abode with him.

So, every night the Sioux chief, who bore the name of the Pawnee-killer, perched upon a table, played upon the drum for the amusement of the pleasure-seekers who patronized the Saloon's Rest.

It is probably hardly necessary to remark that the performance of the wild son of the prairie upon the big drum was not calculated to please musical ears, as his execution tended more to noise than to harmony; but the painted Indian was a curiosity, and the sailors who dropped in to enjoy the hospitalities of the dance-house, were never weary of inviting the noble red-man to join them in a social glass, and to do the Sioux chief full justice, it is perhaps necessary to state that he never declined an invitation to drink; and that, when a question was put to him, no matter what the purport was, he invariably answered, "Rum."

The table had unexpectedly given away under the weight of the chief, and both he and the big drum had come to the floor all in a heap.

The Indian picked himself up, responded to the question of was he hurt? by the usual answer, "Rum," and again commenced operations on the drum.

Allen, looking around, beheld a stranger, clad in dark clothes, standing by the end of the bar.

"Are you the keeper of the place?" the stranger asked.

Allen looked at the man suspiciously for a moment; it was his nature to be ever on his guard.

"Yes; what of it?" he said.

"Nothing; only I want a word or two with you in private," the stranger replied, carelessly.

"Well, I guess you kin have it; there ain't no law ag'in it that I knows on," but Allen in his own mind wondered what the man wanted.

"Do you know a man called Tom Bishop?" the stranger asked, leaning over the counter.

Allen stared at the question, then pondered over it for a moment before he answered: "Well, I s'pose I know him," he said, slowly; "what of it?"

Allen was suspicious; like all men whose actions place them in perilous positions, he ever dreaded danger.

"Oh, nothing particular; he'll be here pretty soon."

"What to-night?" The keeper of the dance-house seemed a little disturbed.

"Yes, within half an hour."

"What's the trouble?" Allen said, just a little nervous, and he glanced around the room, as if to see who his visitors were; "anybody wanted?"

"No."

"Ain't got any thing to do with me?"

"No."

"Well, I thought it wouldn't be," said Allen, evidently feeling relieved. "Every thing is straight as far as I know. I don't 'low wrong in my house. The perlice is down on me, I know, but they ain't got any reason to be. Tain't my fault if the boys get into a muss once in a while. I'd like to see the house where they don't. I keep as quiet a place as there is in the district, an' I'll bet stamps on it."

"Nothing to trouble you. Bishop comes with a few friends on a little business."

Again the landlord looked around the room.

"But I don't see anybody here—"

"It isn't that," interrupted the stranger. "It's a little outside business. He'll want a private room and a bottle of wine. The wine is to be doctored."

"Yes, but I don't want to git into—"

"Oh, it's all right!" cried the stranger, interrupting Allen; "he'll explain every thing when he comes. By the way, you needn't say that I put you up to the job. Maybe he wouldn't like my interfering in the matter, because that's his affair, while I'm on a different lay. Now I want to fix something with you. Let me whisper in your ear."

Allen bent over the bar while the stranger whispered to him.

"What do you want to do that for?" exclaimed Allen, in great astonishment, when the stranger had finished.

"That's my little game," replied the other. "Now if a ten-dollar note is any inducement to you—"

"Yes, but there ain't a-going to be any trouble," the dance-house keeper said, suspiciously.

"No; that's all right."

"It's a bargain, then."

CHAPTER XII. THE BARGAIN.

THE carriage containing Coralie and the old savant, Bishop and Van Rensselaer, rolled leisurely onward. The driver did not seem to be in any great hurry.

Conversation there was none, and the time passed slowly away until, at last, the carriage halted.

"Tell the old gentleman that he must remain here for a few moments; it will not be long," Van Rensselaer said, in the ear of Coralie.

"My friend will not expect us so soon, and I must prepare him," then Van Rensselaer descended from the carriage.

Coralie delivered the message to the savant.

"I think I'll get out and see where we are," Bishop whispered to Hartwright.

"I do not feel the slightest curiosity," the savant answered. "All that I wish is to see the face of this girl."

Bishop dismounted from the carriage.

The coach was standing in a narrow, dark street.

Van Rensselaer stood a few paces down the street. Bishop joined him. The two removed their dominoes and masks and tossed them into the street.

"The dance-house is down at the corner," Bishop said. "But, ain't you afraid that the old man will see your face? or are you going to keep out of his way?"

"I am all prepared," Van Rensselaer answered, and he drew a full beard from his pocket, which corresponded in color with his hair. "I shall put this on, and as I don't want to venture into the light, he will hardly detect the disguise."

"That's a good idea," Bishop said, in evident admiration.

"Let us get on."

"Come ahead."

Van Rensselaer replaced the beard in his pocket, and the two walked down the street.

Near the corner Bishop halted in front of a door.

"This is the side-door," he said; "we had better carry him in here. He'll tumble to our game if he sees the dance-house."

"Yes, that is well thought of."

"Just wait here, and I'll bring the keeper of the dance-house, and then we can fix matters."

Van Rensselaer nodded his head and Bishop disappeared around the corner.

"Why did this man return from India?" Van Rensselaer muttered, as he paced restlessly up and down. "Just as I thought myself safe—that no power on earth could shake me—this man springs into my path with the paper that has been buried from sight for three years. Oh, cursed luck!"

and he ground his teeth in anguish; "why did not the thugs in the thicket, or the tigers in the jungle, prey upon this man and thus have kept him from my path? But the paper shall be mine!"

Bishop had entered the saloon, and, from the manner in which he saluted the dance-house keeper, it was plain that he was an old acquaintance.

"How's business, John?" he asked.

"Middlin'; take something?" Allen said.

"No, thank you, got a little business on hand here to-night."

"Ah?"

"Yes; want a private room and a bottle of wine," Bishop said, carelessly. "I suppose you can fix the wine so as to make a fellow feel a little sleepy after he drinks it?"

and Bishop leaned over the counter and lowered his tone as he put the question.

"Well, to oblige you, Mr. Bishop, I s'pose I might be able to fix up something of that sort. Of course we don't make a practice of doin' such things, you know."

"Oh, of course not."

"What is your little game, anyway?" asked Allen, suddenly.

Bishop winked at him.

"Can't tell tales out of school, you know."

"Nothing dangerous?"

"Oh, no, I'll fix it."

"I've got a friend outside, who pays the piper," Bishop said. "Just come outside and he'll make every thing all correct."

Allen took his hat from under the counter, called to his assistant to take his place, and followed Bishop into the street.

They turned the corner and joined Van Rensselaer, who had been impatiently waiting for them.

"I've explained to this gentleman what we want," Bishop said to Van Rensselaer, referring to Allen.

"Glad to take you, sir. I guess we can arrange things," Allen said, ducking his head to Van Rensselaer.

"You understand; we want a private room and a bottle of wine?" the young man said.

"Yes, a fixed one," Allen observed, knowingly; "one of the kind which makes folks sleepy after they drink the liquor."

"Exactly; that is what we want; but, understand, nothing to endanger life."

"Oh, blazes! do you s'pose I'm a fool?" cried Allen, bluntly. "Do you s'pose I want to bring the police down onto my place, say?"

"How much will this be?"

"Cost you a ten-spot, Judge, and that's dirt cheap. If you wasn't a friend of Mr. Bishop, I'd charge you twenty; but seein' how it is, I want to be as reasonable as I kin."

Van Rensselaer placed the ten-dollar note in the hand of the dance-house keeper.

"There was nothing in front nor on either side to account for the altered attitude of the animals. Whatever was causing it must be behind him."

He listened, at the same time conjecturing.

Why should he conjecture? There could be no doubt about what had freshly frightened the wolves. Richard Darke had recovered from his scare, reflected, and was coming back. The next scene in the tragedy would be his *finale*—the completion of his long-thwarted vengeance.

Clancy, sure of its being Darke, listened for the sound of a horse's hoofs. He listened, without hearing it. There was no tread of horse nor hoof-stroke of any kind.

Instead, a pattering of soft paws, that could not have been heard but for the hollow, creaking rock underlying the surface of the plain. This, acting as a conductor, carried to his ears a sound which he could distinguish as that of some animal running rapidly, but one without hoary hoof.

He had no time to form a conjecture as to what sort of animal it was. Before he could think of it, the pattering came nearer, at length seeming close behind his head.

Then a hot, damp breath struck against his brow, different from that of the coyotes;

"Better just go up-stairs so as to be familiar with the way."

"I will."

Then the two heard the noise of bolts moving in their sockets; the key turned in the lock, the door opened, and Allen appeared.

"Get a light, John, won't you?" Bishop said.

"All right," and the dance-house keeper retreated into the darkness of the entry.

"This is a pretty hard place, isn't it?" Van Rensselaer asked.

"Yes, just about as hard as they make 'em. Heaven help the poor sailor who gets in here with a few dollars in his pocket. If they can't get his money away by any other means, they drug his liquor, then rob him and toss him out in the street. In the morning, half the time the robbed man can't remember where he was the night before, and if he does remember, and tries to get his money back, why they bring up a whole host of witnesses to either swear he was never in the place, or else that he hadn't any money to pay for the drinks he ordered when he first came in."

I should think that the police would break up such dens."

"They break 'em up?" and Bishop laughed in contempt. "Why, these men run the police force, and elect the magistrate who sits on the bench to try 'em! There's too much money to be made out of just such places as this for to shut 'em up. When honest men rule New York, perhaps there'll be a stop put to this sort of thing. But as long as the shoulder-litters run the machine it will never be done."

The return of the dance-house keeper with a lighted candle, put a stop to the conversation.

"Come on, gen'ts," Allen said.

The two followed him up-stairs, turned the corner, and entered room No. 1.

"This will do," Van Rensselaer said; then he took the candle from the hand of Allen, and the three retraced their steps to the street again.

"Call them," Van Rensselaer said.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 119.)

Tracked to Death: OR, THE LAST SHOT.

BY CAPT. MAYNE REID.
AUTHOR OF "HELPLESS HAND," "LONE RANCHER,"
"SCALP HUNTERS," "WHITE CHIEF," ETC.

CHAPTER XXI. SOFT FOOTSTEPS.

Up to his neck in the earth Clancy still remained, in mortal agony, both of mind and body. For the mold, firmly trodden down, pressed against his ribs, forcing them inward. With his chest thus confined, he could scarce inhale air sufficient for breathing. At intervals he experienced a sense of suffocation, with which no physical pain can compare. It is too horrid to be described.

And once more the coyotes were around him, grinning and growling, their white teeth shining conspicuously in the moonlight.

How he wished at that moment to have one of his arms free, with a weapon in his hand! Not wherewith to fight off the wolves, but to take his own life! He was tired of it, now. Existence like that was more than agonizing; it was unendurable. He even regretted that Darke had gone off; was almost vexed with himself for having done that which caused him to make retreat. Calling out his name and shrieking "Murderer!" must have contributed to the scare that carried him away. Better had he remained; better had he done what he no doubt would—killed him, Clancy, and so put a period to his agony. Any thing would be preferable to what he now experienced. It was torture—terrible—excruciating!

He could not bear it much longer. No man could, however strong, however courageous, however firm his faith in the mercy of the Omnipotent!

Though this remained, his strength and courage were fast failing him. He now knew that he must die; he wanted to die!

He was likely to have his wish; the wolves would gratify it, and soon. They were now nearer than ever. He saw the white serrature of their jaws and red panting tongues within three feet of his face. He felt their hot breath steaming against his brow. Every instant he expected to feel the touch of their teeth. He closed his eyes and prayed for death.

It would not come, and he again opened them.

As he did so, the jackals were drawing back, with shut jaws and tails dropping down to the grass. He had last seen them within three feet of his face. They were now at twice the distance, and still retreating.

They were not going off hastily, or as if in wild scare. Whatever was causing the change did not seem so terribly to alarm them. On the contrary, they moved in slow, skulking gait, ceding the ground inch by inch, with evident reluctance and a show of defiance.

What could this mean?

Clancy looked over the plain for an explanation. He sought it in front, to right, to left, as far as he could see by the utmost twisting of his neck.

There was nothing in front nor on either side to account for the altered attitude of the animals. Whatever was causing it must be behind him.

He listened, at the same time conjecturing.

Why should he conjecture? There could be no doubt about what had freshly frightened the wolves. Richard Darke had recovered from his scare, reflected, and was coming back. The next scene in the tragedy would be his *finale*—the completion of his long-thwarted vengeance.

Clancy, sure of its being Darke, listened for the sound of a horse's hoofs. He listened, without hearing it. There was no tread of horse nor hoof-stroke of any kind.

Instead, a pattering of soft paws, that could not have been heard but for the hollow, creaking rock underlying the surface of the plain. This, acting as a conductor, carried to his ears a sound which he could distinguish as that of some animal running rapidly, but one without hoary hoof.

He had no time to form a conjecture as to what sort of animal it was. Before he could think of it, the pattering came nearer, at length seeming close behind his head.

Then a hot, damp breath struck against his brow, different from that of the coyotes;

and immediately after something still warmer touched against his cheek.

It was the tongue of a dog—his own dog—his deer-hound!

CHAPTER XXII. BRASFORT.

"THANK Heaven!"

With this exclamatory phrase Charles Clancy hailed the appearance of his hound.

He spoke it with as much grateful earnestness as if the animal had already released him from his earth-bound prison, so likely to have been his grave.

The joyful emotion was but for a moment. It passed almost as soon as felt. What could the dog do for him? Nothing. No good could come of its being there. True, it would hinder him from being torn by the coyotes. What of that? He must perish all the same.

While he thus reflected the faithful creature continued to lick his brow, giving out a low, fond whimpering, as when a child caresses its mother, with tender arms entwining her neck.

"Where can the dog have come from? They took him away. I saw him tied to one of their horses. Has he got loose, and scented back upon their trail? Or is some one with him, coming after? Might Jupiter—?"

Hope again dawning.

Again soon extinguished. No hoof-stroke, no footstep of pedestrian, no sound of any one approaching over the plain! The first conjecture was the true one. The hound had escaped from its captors and come back of its own accord. It was alone.

Clancy, again despairing, turned his eyes upon the animal, still continuing its caresses.

"Brave Brasfort!" said he, giving the name bestowed in honor of the family with which he had hoped to be allied. "Dear, good dog! You have but come to see me die. You can not save me. No, no. Yet it is something to have you beside me, like a friend by the death-bed! And you will protect me to the end! Ay, those horrid creatures—you will keep them off—that you will. Ah! you won't have to stand sentry long. I feel growing fainter—fainter. Good Brasfort! stay by me. When it's all over you can go. I shall never see her more, but some one may find you. And she would reward you for this fidelity. I know she would. Stay close to me—lie down—down!"

Brasfort did not obey. He did not lie down. Neither did he continue his fond caresses. All at once he ceased caressing his master's head and placed himself in an attitude, as

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EQUAL TO THE "DARK SECRET."

In the next number of the SATURDAY JOURNAL readers will be introduced to the opening chapters of

STRANGELY WED;

OR,

WHERE WAS ARTHUR CLARE?

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON,

which may safely be pronounced one of the finest serials that any paper has contained for a year. In Cousin May Carleton's "Dark Secret" we presented unquestionably one of the very best novels that popular author ever wrote, and in this new work from Mrs. Burton's hands we have not only the best novel she yet has written, but which can not fail to place her in the forefront of American fiction writers.

In character strong, real and life-like; in plot artful, mysterious and exciting; in story strange, original and fascinating, the romance will quite

"TAKE THE READER CAPTIVE"

as do all works of true genius. The Girl-Who is a heroic creation—a martyr in faith and depth of love. She is, indeed, strangely wed, and in that marriage finds at once her greatest suffering and her greatest joy. All the adjuncts—her almost insupportable wicked Guardian—her designing suitor—her beautiful cousin—her gipsy friends, who, in working out their old wrongs and revenge do her the saving service which ennoble them—her lost father—her almost lost and ruined husband—all are of a deeply interesting nature; but, above them all, this Girl-Who stands, a central figure, fairly illuminated by her faith and devotion to him whose home she calls her own, but who left her side at the very moment of marriage.

The novel in its initial chapters gives but little indication of the interest which the march of events soon develops; it develops as a true drama grows—step by step to its climax and denouement; and we ask for the consideration which a publisher is justified in soliciting for what he knows is destined to prove a source of real satisfaction to readers. "STRANGELY WED" is one of our

SUMMER ATTRACTIONS,

of which others are in store which will render the SATURDAY JOURNAL the favorite of all the Weeklies for summer reading.

Our Arm-Chair.

Chat.—We have to answer several inquiries that Mr. Morris has given to Mr. George Morton the sole right to dramatize his "Heracles the Huntback, or, The Wife of Chicago." As a serial to many readers of the SATURDAY JOURNAL have enjoyed this exciting and intensely dramatic narrative that its presentation as an acting play will give it new interest to them. It is one of those stories which, on the stage, is capable of very strong effects, and doubtless will prove very successful. It will soon be put "on the boards," in Chicago, in a very attractive manner.

Of course we can not vouch for the good or bad character of advertisers. Many a good thing is only made accessible to the public by means of the advertising columns of the daily and weekly press; and many a humming is foisted upon the unwary by the same means. All the publisher of the paper can do is to do as we invariably do—refuse to insert an advertisement of an improper character; but when John Phoenix sends in his announcement that he will sell ten dollars' worth of moonshine for a ten-cent stamp, we can not, for the life of us, tell whether John will do as he promises, nor whether, if he does, that his moonshine is worth the ten cents. That remains for the public to attest. As John's advertisement is proper enough and he seems honest enough about it, the publisher can not refuse his insertion. If the public would send no stamps to John until assured that his moonshine is the "real stuff," there would soon be an end to impositions. If any of our friends are victimized by any advertiser in our columns, and will let us know that they have been so victimized, we will be glad to hear from them.

"Go to the country, if you can," is good advice; to poor, overworked human nature. Don't go, however, to the grand caravansers of Long Branch, Saratoga or Cape May, but to some cool, quiet summer retreat where there is rest—real rest for body and mind; where you can commune with birds and flowers, and green fields; where you can drink in Nature's sweet restorer, the air of the hills and woods. Avoid the great centers of fashion as you would avoid a pestilence, for they breed discontent, they are fearfully expensive, they begot tastes that are essentially vicious, and they leave the system enervated and exhausted. Go to the Country, for God made the Country, and he made it that Men might Live!

An Earnest Talk With Young Men.—In Philadelphia, a few days since, a salesman in a large dry-goods store, was detected pilfering silks, etc., and upon his examination it was proven that his wages were three dollars

per week! Referring to this, the N. Y. Tribune says:

"Nor is this pittance of wages an exceptional case, either in this city or in Philadelphia. The streets are crowded with lads of fifteen to twenty years of age utterly without means, cursed with too gentle birth and breeding to earn their living as mechanics, eager to get into the grooves of business life, and frequently with capacity to succeed if once placed in them. They are taken into business establishments as errand-boys, and usually worked hard and paid pitiful salaries."

How true this is, thousands of lads can attest; and the literal swarm of capable young men daily seeking for employment, in commercial circles, is evidence conclusive of the enormous overplus of this class of workers.

And yet, we have the fact forced upon us daily, that this army of needy young men is receiving constant recruits from those who leave the farm or workshop, or the duller life in the country village, to "try their fortunes" in the great cities. Instead of prospects brightening, for such fortunes, it is clear that the future of these young aspirants is discouraging in the extreme.

We are so fully impressed with the importance of this matter, that we ask our young men to consider it carefully. Is it not, first, abandoning a certainty for an uncertainty, to leave your homes in the interior for a life in the cities; and, second, will it pay to bestow the six or eight years of sacrifice and labor now absolutely necessary to attain to a "paying" position as bookkeeper, cashier, salesman, commercial traveler, etc., etc.? We say, no!

If we could marshal before us the ten thousand young men who are now receiving from \$1,000 to \$2,000 per year, in this city, as employees in stores, banks, insurance, railway and brokers' offices, factories, etc., etc., and should ask them the question—"has it paid?" we know the overwhelming response would be "No!" Had the same time and labor been bestowed in acquiring fortune in villages, in the country, or in the shop of the well-paid mechanic, it would have been far better for them in the aggregate.

The evil which underlies the whole case is the demoralization of the public mind regarding the value of money. To live well, to sport good clothes, mingle in "high life," is the first and last thought of the great majority of those who float to the great business centers for employment. They see the power of money and almost instinctively bow down to the idol which ruins so many.

The young man who looks at life with reference to health, happiness and usefulness, makes a sad mistake if he assumes that money is a chief requisite. It is not; on the contrary, it is frequently brings curses as blessings; and he only is wise who regards it simply as a means to gratify pure and proper tastes, and uses it solely to his own rational advancement.

Let the young man be honest, earnest and independent; let him pursue any calling for which he is fitted; let him regard no profession as more "honorable" than any good trade or pursuit; let him, when he seeks for a wife, shun the expensive creature of fashion and seek one of the sweet, pure-minded country or village girls, who will be a helpmate indeed; and thus proceeding, rest assured, young sir, you will never regret that your steps were not guided to the great cities to make you one of the multitude who there contend for the pittance of fickle fortune.

THE REASON WHY.

Does anybody wonder that there are so many faded women who look the way they do? Women who were once pretty young things, fresh and pleasing, but generally possessed of that charming sort of indecision that yields always to any stronger power exerted to guide them.

Such women are sure to marry early, for they never possess stamina to say "no" to any one with pluck enough to ask them, though for the life of them they can't enter into the solemn spirit of truth embodied in the promise "to love, cherish, obey, and cleave together, through sickness or health, forever." They stick to the letter of the promise firmly enough; they make good wives in the literal sense which pins down to the simple routine of household duties; they look after their husband's buttons, and cook his dinners, and bring up their babies faithfully enough.

They are fastidious housewives, and would think it a willful waste of time to sit down for a few moments' rest while there is a shred clinging to the carpet or a chair which stands in need of dusting. They would think it an unpardonable sin to sandwich some sparkling little editorial chit-chat into the solid extent of their working hours. They can scarcely find time to glance at the fashion reviews, which always exert more or less interest in every feminine mind.

The morning papers, deliciously damp and odorous of the press, come to the table regularly as the breakfast steak; but the head of the household, peruses them undisturbed by query, undisturbed by comment, for it has come to be a recognized fact to him that "women-folks don't care any thing for politics, and there's nothing else of any account this morning, you see."

That's his view of it. And she—the mother of the clamorous little brood that call hastily for muffins and potato—wonders what he can find in the News by Telegraph that takes him so long to digest, but, nevertheless, occupies his own breakfast hour in waiting upon the little ones, and when they are through, of course she has no appetite for the coffee and toast, now stone cold.

There was a time once when she used to read the "Poet's Corner" of the morning daily, and the simple little melodies unconsciously smoothed the knotty tangle of the whole day's cares.

But that was ten or a dozen years ago, when married life was new, and there were no tedious, mischief-making boys to throw the household goods in disorder fast as one weary pair of hands can put them into place.

There were no little jackets then with elbows continually out, nor pantaloons forever in need of patching. She wasn't bothered then, every hour of the day, about strings and sticks, jack-knives and fishing-tackle, kites, bows, tugs, or miniature steam engines, which latter she has a nervous dread may blow up some day to the individual detriment of the adventurous little engineer.

She is so accustomed to hearing her husband's depreciation of women and "women's notions," that she has long, long ago ceased to ask for crumbs of information in regard to the great sensations that are always thronging the busy world. Her

world is confined within the four walls of her home, and the stunted spirit seldom feels prescribed by the limit.

She regards the "woman movement" with holy horror, and no sooner would think of widening her own narrow sphere of action than she would think of taking the reins of official, or, for that matter, home government, into her own hands.

Oh, these bleached, narrow-viewed drudges! Why will they remain willing victims of exploded superstitions? I never see one but I think: "You poor, spiritless creature, you are surely a martyr to a cause unbelieved."

For, say what you may, the mere condition of living and laboring is neither boon to her nor blessing to humanity.

It is all well to make home the first object. It is well to devote the first thoughts to the comfort of husband and children, but it is not well to lose the respect and companionship of these. It is not well to let those noisy boys grow out from under a mother's loving control for lack of attendant sympathy with their expanding minds. It is not well for them to know "mother" as only a useful machine for starching their linen and keeping their garments in trim, or a convenient shield to come between their peccadilloes and the father's displeasure.

It is unpardonable of any woman to be quite ignorant of current topics in our day. Even a superficial knowledge is better than none, and the "Poet's Corner" will give truer insight to the beauties and duties of life than her present reading summed in the record of births, marriages and deaths.

Few people realize what a soothing influence that same "Poet's Corner" can exert, or how the simple rhythm may tune with the mind to a perfect chord.

Don't let the generation get quite ahead, you home-working women. Live with the passing time. Keep pace above all with those who are dearest to you. They'll not thank you for it if you do slave your life out for them, and it will be a bitter reproach some day to discover that those fast boys are ashamed of mother. Who can blame them though, while you wear dowdyish gowns, rusty hair, a tired, cheerless countenance, and burden your mind with worries some cares that never rise above the kitchen distresses?

Mothers and wives, for the sake of your own peace, don't let the little frets in the smooth course of life fade all the brightness out of your features, or grind all the intelligence out of your souls. Learn continually as you go, or this fast age of ours will sweep you into some obscure eddy, or leave you stranded, while those you have toiled for rush ahead with the stream, and are wholly lost to you.

J. D. B.

Foolscap Papers.

My Cabinet.

I HAVE fitted up one of my rooms for the collection of a cabinet of relics and curiosities, and I am pleased to say that, by divers modes and various manners, and one way and another, I have succeeded in gathering together one of the best and rarest collections in the world. It has put me to a world of trouble, hence to nature, and to what I have gained, but I am not stingy. What I mean by a princely fortune is a modern princely fortune that lacks something of being a paltry million.

Among my collection there is the veritable apple which Eve ate, sworn to by several living and perfectly reliable witnesses. Then I have, duly labeled, a very large section of the hole in the ground that was made by the explosion of the mine at Petersburg, Va.

You will here behold the "last sigh of the Moor," not living, of course, but stuffed with straw and bona fide; it was caught after a long chase.

I have several life-like oaths of the Duke of Wellington petrified; they are entirely harmless, now, and are well worth a visit.

I have succeeded in procuring the sword that Damocles saw in a vision hanging by a thread above him. It was about to fall when it was taken down, as it might have injured somebody. I have it hanging now by a two-inch rope and a babe needn't be afraid of it.

I have a large assortment of embalmed hopes put up expressly for my cabinet. You will be pleased with a rainbow which I caught at Niagara. It also is stuffed with straw, and yet retains its brilliant colors. I caught it in a steel-trap.

Here we have a streak of lightning, which I caught myself, in my hat, after an exciting chase of over an hour, and tamed. It is perfectly docile, and the most timid need not be afraid of it.

Here you will observe H. G.'s old white hat. This is not much of a curiosity to people living in New York, but it will be to foreigners. It was fortunately picked off the last hook Mr. G. had hung it up on, and it is now preserved in pickle.

You will see the old boot that belonged to the man whose father's brother's wife's husband's cousin knew the fellow that carried the brickbat to the man that split the stick that made the match that lighted the light that got kicked over by a cow and burned the city of Chicago down, procured at great outlay.

In connection with this you will also see here the first house that was burned down by the fire in Chicago. It was a small one.

I have on exhibition one section of the veritable ladder that Jacob saw in his dream. My agent had great difficulty in procuring this much of it. It shows signs of decay, for it has evidently gone the rounds.

I have the handle of the little dipper which you have often noticed in the sky. I was obliged to make a trip after this article myself, and had a high old time of it. It was higher than any hopes I ever had of getting it, but I succeeded.

You will also see the coat worn by the "last man" of whom you have heard so much. It was several days before I could induce him to part with it, and it was a pretty tight affair, as was the coat.

I have also some footprints, which I picked up on the sands of time, and they are not very small either. They look as if the sands of Time themselves would run out before they would ever be washed away. Some of my enemies have asserted that they are my own footprints; but, beyond the fact of possession, I have no proprietorship in them.

I have a fine Jack o' Lantern, which a party of us caught in a swamp after an exciting chase. I carried it home in my coat-pocket, and it is now carefully done up in brown paper, and salted.

You will be interested in some three-cornered pieces of broken English which I caught in a basket as they fell from the lips of Alexis.

I have a few of which I caught without any trouble while on a hunting excursion for Little Neck oysters; also a cold which I procured while on my way home one night last week. Both of these interesting curiosities are preserved in dry spirits.

I have a few of my early smiles picked in vinegar.

You will also see the left fore-paw of the renowned Ursa Major or Great Bear, procured expressly at my expense.

I have a few shooting stars bottled and warranted not to shoot anybody; the lid of Mahomet's coffin, which was suspended between the heavens and the earth; some leaves of the last rose of summer; the horse that Richard III. would have given his kingdom for if he could have got it in time; Napoleon's last words (died); three links from the chain of circumstances; Cleopatra's kiss (sugar-coated); the genealogy of the Presidential Race; and last, but not least, the greatest curiosity living—

Yours truly,

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

WE commence this week THE SURF ANGEL, by Col. Prentiss Ingraham. It has been "on the books" for several weeks past, and will now be given "its turn." It is a very pleasing short serial—one of that nature particularly adapted for summer reading—a story of the Bermudas, off the coast of Florida, in which an Island Maid becomes the heroine of a very novel history.

THE WAY TO SUCCEED.

FORTUNE, success, fame, position, are never gained but by piously, determinedly, bravely sticking, growing, living to a thing till it is fairly accomplished. In short, you must carry a thing through if you want to be anybody or any thing. No matter if it does cost you the pleasure, the society, the thousand pearly gratifications of life. No matter for these. Stick to the thing, and carry it through. Believe you were made for the matter, and that no one else can do it. Put forth your own energies. Be awake, electrify yourself, and go forth to the task. Only once learn to carry a thing through in all its completeness and proportions, and you will become a hero. You will think better of yourself; others will think better of you. The world in its very heart admires the stern, determined doer. It sees in him its best sight, its brightest object, its richest treasure. Drive right along, then, in whatever you undertake. Consider yourself amply sufficient for the deed. You'll be successful.

Short Stories from History.

Origin of the Drama.—Menander may be regarded as the father of what is called the new comedy in Greece, which, if inferior to the old in strength and fire, far exceeded it in delicacy, regularity, and decorum, came nearer to nature, and to what we conceive of the legitimate drama. Among his contemporaries who wrote upon this reformed plan, were Philemon, Diphilus, Polidorus, Philopides, and Posidippus; and from many fragments which remain, it appears that they were not only bold declaimers against the vice and immorality of the age in which they lived, but that they ventured upon truths, and doctrines in religion, totally irreconcilable to the popular superstitions and idolatries of the heathen world; and, therefore, says Cumberland, or rather Bentley, we can not but admire the extraordinary toleration of their pagan audiences.

According to some accounts, Menander wrote eighty plays, while others more than double that amount; but whatever may have been their number, it has been thought that morality, taste and literature scarcely ever suffered more irreparably than by the loss of them. A few fragments only remain, which, says Warton, ought "to be as highly prized by the curious as was the *Coax Venus*, which Apelles left imperfect and unfinished."

We have many testimonies of the admiration in which he was held during his lifetime. Pliny informs us that the kings of Egypt and Macedon sent ambassadors to invite him to their courts, and even fleets to convey him; but that Menander preferred the free enjoyment of his studies to the promised favors of the great. Yet the envy and corruption of his countrymen sometimes denied his merit, that justice at home which it found abroad; for notwithstanding the astonishing number of plays which he wrote, he won no more than eight prizes. Philemon, a contemporary, and much inferior dramatic poet, by the partiality of the judges, often disappointed him of the laurel; which made Menander once say to him: "Tell me fairly, Philemon, if you do not blush when the victory is decreed to you against me?" Menander's wonderful talent at expressing nature in every condition, and under every accident of life, gave occasion to Aristophanes, the grammarian, to utter this extraordinary invocation: "Oh! Menander and Nature, which of you copied your pieces from the other's work?" And Ovid, from a similar impression of his excellence, has thus pronounced his immortality:

"Dum fallax servas, dumns pater, improba laena,
Vivet: dum meretrix blanda, Menander erit."

OUR LADY READERS ESPECIALLY

will be interested in the announcement of the early appearance in our columns of serial novels by Mrs. Mary Reed Crowell, Cousin May Carleton and the exquisite and highly dramatic love and life romance,

THE PEARL OF PEARLS,

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.

While these stories are well calculated to charm all readers, to those who delight in portrayments of "the grand passion," and in delineations of the woman heart, all the three romances will have unequalled attraction.

THE NEW YORK SATURDAY JOURNAL.—This paper has a fine reputation, its circulation is very extensive, its tone pure, and it employs a large and able corps of writers who contribute to the various departments of fiction, humor, essays, sketches, etc. The illustrations are good, and the general arrangement of the paper excellent.—*Pulton (N.Y.) Herald.*

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. retained that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders.—Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MSS."—MSS. which are imperfect are also not wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon exclusivity of MS. as "copy," third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note also paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, bearing of each page as it is written, its neatly printed in its full or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their efforts early attention.—Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We shall have to pronounce the following unavailable, viz.: "The Old Almanack," "The Double Elopement and What Came of It," "The Green Ranger," "The Hag's Crime," "Best Way to Farm It," "A Leaf From a Life," "The Chasm's Story," "A Tropical Beauty," "Miss Jones' Surprise," "Polly Ann," "Good for Nothing Joe," "The Wrestling Match," "A Good Catch," "Yes or What?" "Oh, Who Will Marry Me?" "A Sign," "Suspense," "Keep Me Safe," "Keep Me Well," "A Midnight Death," "Rosemary Home and Its Chambers."

The following contributions we place on the accepted list, viz.: "The Choman," "The Prairie Outlaws," "A Brave Boy," "A Gift of Love," "Why Did She Do It?" "Will He Come?" "Miss Me, Darling."

The three MSS. by E. P. P. we can not report on at present.

The sketches of Western life by Bracebridge are hardly up to the standard.

We will give Mrs. K. T. D. an answer soon by letter.

The "Over the Sea" letters are not just what we want—good as they are.

J. M. H. and W. M. We know nothing as to firm named or of the article advertised. All we can say—be wary of submitting money for any and all, whose true value is not attested, and then, too, never remit money to parties whose integrity and responsibility are not assured. It is astonishing how readily people respond to advertisements which promise ten dollars for one.

KATE H. The numbers containing Overland Kit are 68 to 72 inclusive.—15 numbers in all, 15 cents each. Mrs. FANNIE M. Laura's Pearl is contained in 11 numbers; 60 cents.

J. F. D. We shall soon commence Mr. Whittaker's splendid story of the Revolution, "Double-Death." Your good opinion of the SATURDAY JOURNAL is re-echoed by thousands. Its course is "Onward and Upward."

GUY VIOLA. Have written to you by mail.

G. W. G. If the lady was not satisfied with your explanation, we see no other course to pursue than to await for her displeasure to pass away. In the meanwhile treat her graciously, to show her that you are a gentleman.

The poem of C. M., viz.: "The Little Candy Gal," is much too long for any thing but a circus poster.

B. G. The "Dog-days" are not essentially mad-dog-days, for dogs do not run at any and all, but Sirius, the Dog Star, is in the ascendant—hence dog-days. Our only advice is keep cool—if you can!

FLORIST. It may be laid down as a general rule, that a greater number of white flowers are fragrant than of any other color; yellow, then, red, and then blue, after which comes a large soft color, violet, green, orange, brown and black.

CORAN. Never allow infants' clothes to be washed in soda, as the washing of clothes in soda is apt to cause "breaking out" on the face and neck. Washwomen, generally, deny that they use soda, but it can be easily detected by soaking a clean cloth, which they have washed, in fresh water, and then taste the water; if it tastes brackish and salty, soda has been used.

MARY LAW. Oil-cloth should never be scrubbed with a brush, but, after being first swept, it should be cleansed by washing with a large soft cloth, sponge and lukewarm or cold water. On no account use soap, or hot water, as either will bring off the paint or stain its lustre.

NIXO. Large gilt crosses are worn around the neck on black velvet ribbons, and are very stylish with light dresses.

INQUIRE. Polished steel can always be kept clean of rust and stain by burnishing with wool and damp weather applying oil freely. If the steel has become stained, place a drop of oil upon the spot and let it stand for some time, then wash with soap and water, and it will remove the stain if the steel is not etched.

D. THOMAS, of N. Y. Kansas is considered a very good State to stock raise in, but we would prefer Texas. In writing to the Land Commissioners of a State it is not necessary to address them by name—merely address your letter to the Land Commissioner, in care of the State Department, and direct to the Capital.

GARDENER. The manner of treating celery has of late years become greatly simplified, for instead of sowing the seed in "hot-bed," or glass frame, as formerly, it is now sown in the open ground as soon as the earth becomes fit to work in the spring. The celery plot is then kept clear of weeds and grasses, until June or July, when it is time to plant, which is done by setting the plants out in rows, three feet apart, and with the space of six inches between each plant. Treat each plant as a green old man, and the celery as it grows, so as to make it crisp and firm.

MANFIELD. It is not positive that temperance will cause long life, for many intemperate men have lived to a good old age, but there are evident exceptions, for it is well known that dissipation engenders disease in the human system, and causes many young men to find early graves, when by temperate habits they might have lived to a green old age.

MORDECAI. The following are the names of some persons of later years who have enjoyed the greatest longevity: Parr lived to be 150 years of age. Jenkins lived to be 160 years of age. Jane Rieu was 113 years old when she died. Albama Marc died at 151. Thomas Carn died when 90 years old. Don John Taveira de Silva, a Portuguese, died at 118. The Felnerins died at 150 years of age. James Sand, 140 years old. Lloyd Wales, 133 years of age.

INVALID. During the winter months Russian and Turkish baths are powerful aids to the cure of rheumatism, particularly in obstinate rheumatic cases, sciatica, neuralgia and catarrh, and are no doubt most beneficial.

OLD MAN. For baldness, melt one pound of beef marrow; to this, add two ounces of tincture of cantharides; perfume to suit the taste, and rub the bald spot daily with this mixture, and the hair will grow again.

SUPPER. Literary men of eminence have generally attributed the Letters of Junius to Sir Philip Francis.

CONSUMPTION. The best time of the year to use mineral waters, is the portion of the year during which the patient can most easily moderate exercise in the open air. The mineral waters should never be used in the height of a hot summer, nor in the midst of a cold winter, but in the spring, after drinking saline waters in the morning; the earlier the better.

COOK. To make a nice vegetable pie, take some of the middle or scum of a cold roast, season it with pepper and salt, and put to it a few pieces of lean bacon or ham. If it be wanted of a high relish, add mace, cayenne and nutmeg, and also force-meat and egg balls, and if you choose, add truffles, mushrooms, sweet-bread cut into small bits, and cocks' combs blanched, if liked. Have a rich gravy to pour in after baking. It will be very good without any of the latter additions.

PRINTER. Literary men, who have made patient researches in the matter, are pretty well united in the opinion, that the first book printed in this continent was by Combever, in Mexico, in the year 1541.

LENA WATTS. To destroy ants, drop some quick-lime upon and around the nest, and then water it, so that the lime will run down, and will kill the ants as they boil water; or dissolve some camphor in spirits of wine, then mix with water and pour in their haunts. Tobacco is also good to destroy them.

GERMAN. Our names of the days of the week were introduced by the Saxons, who derived them from the Scandinavian mythology.

DAISY DEAN. Black grenadine should be made over black silk. If used over a light silk, it will show through directly on the silk itself, and let the polonaise meet the flounces on the skirt.

GROCER. To make home-soup, cut thin four pieces of common soap, and mix with it water, and melt it; then add onion and palm oil, of each a half-pound, and a few drops of oil of cinnamon. Boil all together ten minutes, and then rub dry.

NURSE. A warm bath may be occasionally used—say about once a week. A warm bath cleanses the skin more effectually than either a cold or tepid bath; but, as a warm bath is more relaxing, it ought not to be used so often as either of the others. A person should not continue longer than ten minutes in the warm water, then should be rapidly rubbed dry.

BELLE. Fans are now worn attached to the side by means of a fancy chain.

Unanswered questions on hand will appear next week.

UNITED AFFECTIONS.

BY L. C. GREENWOOD.

The love that crowns this happy day,
It shall forever last;
Its rosy smile shall o'er us play—
Not buried in the past.

The love that softly whispers now,
Shall they forgotten be?
They ever shall remind me how
You, dear, were won by me.

Upon your hand so snowy white
I press the kissing kiss;
While my young spirit with delight
Knows of no sweeter bliss.

And as you gently lean your head
So fondly on my breast,
I kiss your lips all ruby red,
And hush you, love, to rest.

And love shall make us happy days,
As long as we shall live;
And we shall love each other's ways,
And love for love we'll give.

How She Willed It.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

A LONG, shady, gravelled drive, lying between broad, grass-grown lawns. At one end, a grandly massive bronze gate and, porters' lodge; at the other, Greme House, lofty, antiquated, magnificent. Miriam Sedgewart stood looking up the drive, and her black eyes lightened and laughed as they noted how glorious it was—all that wide-spread domain lying so fair under the June sunshine; all the inheritance of wealth that was stored within the gray, ivy-clad walls of Greme House; she involuntarily smiled as she looked, and congratulated herself that she had, thus far, played her cards so marvelously well.

She always had been lucky; from the time when a passing gentleman and his fragile lady gave her a gold ring for her beauty, to the hour she entered Victor Greme's household as musical governess to his little Elfie.

Very carefully she had felt her way; very deeply laid her plans; and now, standing there at the foot of Victor Greme's estates, she could well afford to congratulate herself that she had well-nigh accomplished that for which she had come.

First, she had taught Elfie to worship her. Her name was on Elfie's lips from morning until night; and the child's father had grown to smiles at the little one's enthusiasm.

Later—only a month back, when the pink blossoms hung like a sunset-tinted cloud over the large orchard, Victor Greme's eyes began to unbend the secret of his soul. Miriam had read aright the signs, and in her heart she sung a jubilate. Victor Greme was won—and Greme House!

That was the grand halcyon chorus, after all; not because the man who could give her this wealth was to be her own; this splendid, stately man, so aristocratic in his bearing, so truly proud in mien, and withal so winning in his graceful love-making; but because of the burden he bore in his hands, that which she thought would satisfy her to repletion.

Miriam Sedgewart was triumphing, in eyes and heart, as she stood under the flickering shadows. Of course, she was rarely beautiful, for what woman, poor and obscure, could rise to the height she was rising to, unless she could first attract, then retain admirers?

And Miriam knew right well, as all beautiful women know, just precisely how charming she was; and what was better, how to use her power. She had used it; her beauty, her grace, her refinement, had served her well; and when she was actually Mrs. Greme, of Greme House, she knew people would never ask her whether she had worn linsey or satin at sixteen.

Then, all these delightful cogitations were suddenly scattered, by the portress, who bustled through the gate, red and out of breath.

"She's come, Miss Miryam! Five trunks and a maid, not to mention—"

Miriam listened coldly. She always was cold with inferiors.

"Who do you mean?"

"Why, Miss Lilla, of course—the master's ward, Miss Elfie."

Miriam felt a sudden tingling sensation in her ears, and then she wondered why she never had heard of this "ward" before. To be sure, Elfie had rambled on about "Lilla" often enough, but somehow Miriam had gotten the impression that she was an elderly lady of whom Elfie was fond.

Now, she knew she must be young—youthful, perhaps, even how a "ward" of Victor Greme's? She must be fashionable—else why the "five trunks and a maid"? And Mr. Greme never had mentioned her in the eleven months she had known him!

Well, she compressed her pretty, ruby-lipped lips, and pursued her way homeward in a stately, graceful sort of way, that she determined should speak volumes to "Miss Lilla," if Miss Lilla should be reconnoitering her approach from any closed lattice.

For, somehow, there had suddenly, incomprehensibly, dawned upon her the idea that she must meet Greme House now!

She had heard before of guardians marrying their wards.

She was passing fair, and sweet as beautiful. Miriam was constrained to acknowledge it, when she and Lilla met, just before dinner, in Mr. Greme's presence.

"Miss Sedgewart, Miss Volmer—I am so pleased to have you meet at last. I am sure you will be famous friends."

Lilla laughed, and held out her tiny little hand in the most friendly, bewitching way imaginable.

"Of course we shall be—unless Miss Sedgewart wills otherwise."

And Miriam laughed and assured her that Miss Sedgewart never willed "otherwise," the while a vague, biting pain was tugging at her heart.

Lilla was so passing lovely; Mr. Greme petted and caressed her so tenderly—ah, dark days were coming, Miriam's heart told her.

Naturally she and Lilla grew very intimate, and all the time, Miriam was striving to accept the disappointment she felt was in store for her; she could not help loving the gentle, lissom girl who had won her against her will.

And so, when the summer days were at their height, Lilla, lounging idly in her room, handed her a ring to look at, laughing and blushing the while.

"I've had it some little time, but I did not like to tell you before. Isn't it perfect—that cluster of diamonds alternating with sapphires? And couldn't I be the proudest, happiest fiancée in the world?"

Miriam turned cold as a stone, but she held out her hand bravely for the ring, "V. G." to "L. V."

It was artistically engraved within—and it told all the pitiful story of Miriam's crushing disappointment; all the more pitiful, because, of late, since under the influence of Lilla's gentle spirit, she had learned that her ambition to reign in Greme House was only a cloak that covered her own love for Victor Greme.

All her life had been a struggle for something higher up, so that she herself hardly knew when or why she began to lose sight of Greme House, and to love, for himself, Victor Greme.

Now, when she held Lilla's engagement-ring in her fingers, knowing the die was cast, and that she must go on alone again, with only her ambition for her companion—how she abhorred the word—the road ahead looked so dreary and empty that she shrank away, almost in fear.

"You ought to be happy," she said, when she had schooled her voice, "for Mr. Greme is a gentleman perfectly calculated to make any woman's life bright and sunny. You have my congratulations, Lilla."

It sounded cold and stiff, somehow, what she said; but, were her words colder than her hopes?

"Yes, I know Mr. Greme is simply perfect—the only trouble is, I am not half good enough for him."

She talked on and on, telling sweet little snatches of secrets to Miriam; and then danced away to dress for dinner.

Elfie came running in directly after.

"Miriam, papa says would you like a ride with us to Shelbourne Falls? We will start in an hour."

She sent word she would much rather remain home—her head ached. Would Mr. Greme kindly excuse her?

She shut and double-locked her door—in such awful agony of soul that she half doubted her sanity.

It was not that her vanity was piqued; it was not that her ambitious hopes were laid low, that she felt such a crushing anguish at her heart. It was all for love, for hopeless, unrequited love.

How strange it seemed that she, Miriam Sedgewart, should be pacing to and fro, pallid as death, and shivering with very grief—because Victor Greme was lost to her!

She, the cold, the proud, the aspiring, to succumb to such a passion!

She couldn't help it, she loved him, deathlessly; and she looked her sorrow full in the face, and tried to fight it—as she had fought for Greme House and Victor Greme—and lost the victory, as she had lost her lover.

She heard the carriage drive away, and Elfie's ringing laugh, but she did not glance from the window. She listened to the stillness about the house, and then, bathing her eyes, crept down through the darkened hall, intending to go to a lonely, shady little spot in the woods, where she had so often taken her evening joy—now to mourn over her dead joy.

Of a sudden, just as she passed, the library door was opened, and Victor Greme came through.

She started, guiltily, and turned her tear-stained face away.

"Miss Sedgewart! I am so very sorry your head aches. Were you seeking the fresh air for relief? Come in here; there is a delightfully cool breeze by the west window."

So kind he was, so thoughtful. Her self-control nearly broke, but she murmured some inaudible words and stepped nearer the outer door.

"Please come in. I would be so much obliged; besides, I have much to say to you. I remained home purposely."

Of course he wanted to tell her of his approaching marriage with Lilla; tell her, perhaps, her services were no longer required—and then, by an effort that sent the blood in quick, irregular bounds to her temples, she bowed assent, and swept proudly, coldly into the sent Mr. Greme handed her, as though she had been a duchess.

He did not seat himself; Miriam did not raise her long, jetty lashes from her marble white cheeks.

There was a silence; then Mr. Greme suddenly bent over her and kissed her.

"Miriam! Miriam! how can I say it? how shall I tell you my love?"

She sprang up, red as a carnation, her frame trembling, her eyes dilating.

"Mr. Greme! how dare you? Poor Lilla!"

Her voice grew husky—not so much from pity for Lilla, she was forced to admit to her own soul, as from sympathy with herself.

"And why need Lilla care? And why should I not dare to offer you all I have to offer—a deathless love? Miriam, do you not love me?"

Ah, did she not? But, what did he mean—what did he mean?

"Mr. Greme," she began, slowly, for every word was a heart-stab, "had you come to me first, before you offered to Lilla?"

He smiled—a sudden joyous smile—and laid his hand lightly over her lips.

"I just comprehend it all, my darling. It is my brother Vernon who is engaged to Lilla—it is Vernon's brother, Victor, who will be engaged to Miriam, if Miriam so wills?"

And, as Lilla laughingly said, so long as Miriam "never willed otherwise," of course she was obliged to marry Victor.

CHAPTER I.

THE HERMIT WRECKER.

UPON one of the largest and most beautiful islands that border the southern coast of Florida, there lived, not many years ago, an old man who was known as the "Hermit Wrecker," by the few who were aware of his existence, though his real name was Ricardo, and in the war of 1812 he had been second in command to the noted pirate, Lafitte.

Upon the pardon of his commander, for his gallant services rendered the Americans in the battle of New Orleans, Ricardo, then a young man of twenty, had left the scene

of his old piratical exploits, and being an outcast from the haunts of men, had sought out this lonely but lovely island near the Florida coast, and in the companionship of his young and beautiful wife had whiled away in idle loneliness the long, long weary years that followed his flight.

No children were born to him, and the tenth year of his stay upon the island, his wife died, and he was left alone, to brood over his crime-stained life, and in solitude repent of his manifold sins.

He had erected a comfortable cabin upon a part of the island which was sheltered from the north winds by a long, sloping hill, which broke off at its summit into a high cliff, from which a wide expanse of ocean met the view.

Far away in the distance, on the other side of the island, was a low dark outline, hardly visible to the naked eye, which marked the Florida coast, and all around the island were reefs of rocks, whose strong foundations beat back the angry sea that broke with stubborn shock against them.

Here and there a small opening might be described in the encircling reefs that girded the island like necklaces of beads, and through these alone could an entrance be made to the quiet little harbor at the southernmost end of this spot of verdure amid a wilderness of waters.

When on the coast with his pirate schooner, Ricardo had been wrecked and cast ashore upon this island, and with the few of his followers who were saved from the wreck, he had spent months there awaiting release from their involuntary articles. No chance of succor coming to them, they had at last built a small sloop-rigged boat, and left the island.

In this way had Ricardo known of the place where he could seek a refuge from the eye of the law, and with a sloop of ten tons, well stored with provisions and necessary articles, he had fled thither with his wife, and there lived up to the opening of this story.

A few vessels had been driven ashore there, in the violent storms which frequently visited the coast, and their crews being lost, Ricardo had possessed himself of the stores and valuables of the wrecked ships, and taken them in his sloop to Pensacola, where he had an agent, an old confederate, who disposed of them, he having turned honest, and with the results of his practical earnings opened a store in that city.

Thus the years rolled on, and silver streaked the dark hair of Ricardo, and each year made his step less active.

One night, some fifteen years before this story opens, Ricardo was awakened by the wind howling madly around his little cabin, and the roar of the ocean, as it hurled its mad breakers against the island, caused it to tremble with their mighty force.

Rising from his cot, Ricardo dressed himself in his storm-suit, and walked forth into the blustering night.

Ascending the hill to the top, he gazed out upon the wind-lashed ocean, and far off saw the glimmer of a light, which came from a struggling vessel.

"She is lost!" he ejaculated to himself, and a grim smile of satisfaction passed over his swarthy face.

Suddenly a vivid flash of lightning lit up sea and island, and by its light Ricardo saw the doomed vessel rushing down upon the reefs, and that she was dismasted and could therefore never beat off from that rocky shore.

Again a flash; but this time from the vessel, and the heavy boom of a gun, mingled with the muttering voice of thunder.

"Ha! it is all up with them now. There! she has struck!" and as he spoke, a mighty wave bore the vessel far up on its crested top and hurled it with fury upon the reefs, where it soon became a mere wreck, and its crew, with many a piercing cry sent forth into that stormy night, sunk into a watery grave.

For two days and nights the storm lasted, and Ricardo dared not attempt to put out to the wreck in his little sloop, but when he arose upon the third day, he found that the winds had subsided, and going down to the harbor he went aboard of his little craft, and turned her prow toward the reef where the large dark hull of the ship was plainly visible.

Skillfully he piloted his boat through the circuitous channel, and as he drew near the wrecked vessel, was astonished to see a form upon the stern waving to him.

For an instant a dark thought flashed through his mind to return to the island and there remain until hunger had taken the life of the survivor, for he dreaded his retreat to be known, and went upon the principle, that "dead men tell no tales."

But his better nature conquered, and he put his helm up and steered again for the vessel.

"Come on quick, please, sir," came in childish tones from the wreck, and Ricardo saw that the speaker was a boy of apparently ten years of age.

In an instant more his sloop grounded against the reef, and throwing his little anchor upon the rocks, he sprang out and clambered up the hull of the vessel.

A strange sight met the view of the Hermit Wrecker, and the cold, piercing eyes softened as he gazed upon the scene before him.

Lying upon a hard mattress, wet with salt water, was the form of a lovely woman of twenty-five, and her head, with its wealth of auburn hair, nestled in the lap of a little girl scarcely more than six years old, who was gently passing her tiny hand over her mother's—for the resemblance between the child and woman showed that they stood in that relationship to each other—head, while her dark, lustrous eyes were raised to Ricardo as he advanced toward them.

Standing near was the boy whom Ricardo first noticed, and his fine face wore a glad expression, as he said:

"Oh, I am so glad you have come; for we would have died without you."

Without answering the boy, Ricardo advanced to the spot where lay the woman, the head still supported by the little girl, and asked, kindly:

"Is your mother sick, little one?"

"Mamma is dead, sir!" came the simple, lisping answer, and Ricardo started as he placed his hand upon the woman's forehead and found it cold in death.

He had stood upon the deck of his pirate vessel when carnage held high revel, and had dealt many a blow that sent the human soul from its casket of clay; upon his lonely island he had stood by the bedside of his dying wife, the woman who had given up land and kindred for him, and afterward, with bitter anguish at his heart, he had dug her narrow grave, and placed her there to rest; he had seen many bodies cast, cold

and lifeless, upon his island home, and been indifferent to their fate; but now he was touched; his heart was thrilled with pity and sorrow at the simple words of the little girl, and unable to restrain the tears which had not coursed down his cheeks since his innocent childhood, he bent his head and wept, and deep sobs shook his frame.

The children gazed at the weakness—you may call it such, reader, if you will—of the strong man, and their young hearts were oppressed with the weight of some great woe, which their minds could not yet grasp, and with awe-stricken faces they looked at each other for awhile, and then, gently placing her hand upon Ricardo's arm, the little girl said, softly:

"Don't cry, sir; mamma won't go away from us; she is only dead."

"Only dead! poor little innocent, you little know what death is," said the Hermit Wrecker, and then drawing his rough coat-sleeve across his tear-stained eyes, he carefully raised the head of the dead woman and placed it upon the mattress.

"Now, children, tell me, is there any one else on the ship besides yourselves?"

"No, sir; we were in the cabin when the ship struck, and all the rest were on deck, and the waves washed them overboard. I came up early this morning with Mrs. Vane and Theone, for we wished to see where we were," answered the boy.

"When did the lady, Mrs. Vane, I believe you called her, die?"

"Just after we came upon deck. I brought the mattress for her as she was very sick, and she lay down, with her head in Theone's lap, and, without saying a word to us, she died."

"Poor thing! where was the ship from?"

"We came from New Orleans, sir, and were going to England. I had my tutor with me, for father wished me to travel with him, through Europe; but my tutor was lost."

"What is your name, my boy?"

"Milo Duncan, sir, and this is Theone Vane, and Theone's father was in England, waiting to meet his wife; I know he will feel very bad to hear of the loss of the ship."

"Indeed he will, my boy. Now, you and little Theone must go with me to the island, and I will take care of you until you can return to your homes."

Entering the cabin, Ricardo took the children's clothing and other things to make them comfortable, and then aided them into his boat.

Then he lowered the body of Mrs. Vane to the rocks, and placed it in the little cabin of the sloop, for he wanted to bury her where her child could visit her grave.

In the cabin and other parts of the ship he found many things that would prove useful to them, and transferring them to the sloop, he set sail for the island.

Upon his arrival he took the children ashore, and then raising the body of Mrs. Vane, carried it to the lonely spot in the island where he had buried his wife.

A grave was soon dug, and little Theone gazed for the last time upon the loved face of her mother.

Day by day Ricardo made trips to the wreck, until he brought from it all that was valuable, and as the weeks passed, and the children became accustomed to their new mode of life, the Hermit was glad that he had saved them from death, for they cheered his lonely life, and seemed happy in their island home.

CHAPTER II.

OCEAN, LAND AND SKY.

TEN years have passed since the incidents related in the chapter which commences this story, and in those ten years changes have come to those who dwelt upon that lonely island, which so long had been the home of Ricardo, the Hermit Wrecker.

Seated in a chair before his cabin, the former pirate was lazily smoking and day-dreaming of his past life, and quietly enjoying the lovely sunset and beauty around him.

His eyes were still bright and piercing, but his hair and beard had turned to snow white, and the former upright figure was gradually bending with age.

Suddenly he arose, and laying aside his pipe, with slow step descended the hill toward the cliff which looked seaward.

Standing upon the cliff and gazing out upon the ocean was a young girl, whom, though changed from the child of six years to the maiden of sixteen, the reader will at once recognize as Theone, whom Ricardo had taken from the wrecked ship long years before.

Her golden hair was loose, and fell in heavy masses upon her shoulders and down her back, and the dark-blue eyes, with drooping lashes, shone with splendor as she looked seaward.

Her face, lit up by the rosy tints of the setting sun, was indeed beautiful, and the expression it wore was affectionate and trusting, mingled with a look of daring that years of danger had brought there.

She was dressed in a dark suit that fitted her well, though the skirt reached just below her knees, and displayed her small and well-formed feet.

Quietly she stood there, leaning against the only tree which crowned the summit of the hill, and her eyes were bent upon a small schooner yacht that was distant some six miles from the island, and lay becalmed upon the ocean, her sails flapping idly against the masts as she rose and fell upon the ocean swell.

The evening was one of perfect beauty, and land, sea and sky were lit up by the lingering rays of the setting sun, which clothed all in golden light.

A calm rested upon all nature, and Theone felt the gentle influence of the hour as she stood in silence and glanced around her.

No sound, save the sob of the waves breaking upon the pebbly shore, was heard, and, oppressed by the quietude and beauty of the scene, Theone felt unbidden tears come into her eyes, and though she was happy, there was an indescribable sadness creeping over her which she could not explain.

"Theone, no sign of Milo yet?"

"The girl started, awakened from her reverie and replied to Ricardo, who, unperceived or unheard by her, had joined her on the cliff:

"Not yet, father; but then it is calm, and he could not run. Yonder is a vessel now becalmed."

"A vessel! where? Yes, I see her now, but my old eyes are dim with age, and I had not noticed her before, and Ricardo gazed long and intently at the becalmed schooner. "Yes, it must be," he said, half

to himself, "one of those trim little revenue cutters, or a gentleman's yacht! Has she guns on board of her, Theone? Look, for your eyes are good."

"No, father; none that I can see. She is a beautiful vessel, and I can see about a dozen men on her."

"God grant they do not take advantage of this calm to come ashore and find me out!"

"What, father?"

"I say, I hope they will not attempt to land during the calm, for, not knowing the channel, it would be madness for them to try to find their way in."

"No, I hope they will not. But I can go out in the life-boat and pilot them in."

"Never!" The word came sternly from the wrecker's lips, but, seeing the pained look on Theone's face, Ricardo rejoined:

"It will not do, Theone; besides, we have no business with them." Then glancing around the horizon, the wrecker said: "Look, child; there rises a little cloud not larger than your hand, and yet it forebodes a storm. If that party in the fancy schooner yonder loves life, all sail better be made to get away from this coast before that ink-spot spreads across the sky."

Theone glanced in the direction indicated by the wrecker, and saw a small, dark cloud slowly rising above the horizon, and gradually increasing in size, and having had experience in watching the wild storms which swept over the coast, she at once saw that before long the sea would be lashed into fury by the power of the hurricane which would come from that little dark speck upon the otherwise cloudless sky.

With an anxious look she turned seaward and strained her eyes across the waters, longing to discover the distant sail of Milo's boat, for a week before he had left in the little sloop to go to Pensacola, and dispose of the remnants of a vessel, which a month before had been wrecked upon the island.

"I hope Milo is not out at sea now, father; or, if so, is near, so that when the wind freshens he can run in before the storm breaks."

"Yes, I hope so, child; but we need not fear for him, for he has ridden out in the sloop many a worse night than this is likely to be. But come, it is getting dark, and you have not yet gotten my supper," and leading the way, the wrecker retraced his steps toward the cabin, followed by Theone, who, ere she turned from the cliff, cast another long look off over the ocean, trying to pierce the rapidly approaching darkness, in search of Milo's sail.

Entering the kitchen of the cabin, Theone commenced her household duties, and in a short while summoned Ricardo to supper.

Seated at the table, which had formerly been in the cabin of some noble ship which had been lost on the island reefs, the two were eating their supper and chatting pleasantly, when both were almost blinded by a flash so vivid, so dazzling, followed by a terrific crash of thunder which shook the island to its foundations.

They had forgotten about the approaching storm, and gradually the heavens had become inky black, and a heavy gloom was cast upon sea and land.

High in air the dark storm-cloud had rolled on, hiding from view the sunset-sky, and yet no breath of air stirred the waters or filled the sails of the little schooner which still lay almost motionless upon the ocean, her crew little dreaming there was danger in the increasing blackness of the heavens.

Startled from their seats by the flash of lightning and crash of thunder, Ricardo and Theone sprang to the door of the cabin and gazed forth, and a wild, tempestuous scene met their view.

The wind was flying and waiving across the island, and tall trees bent before its rude blasts, while all around was lit up by the constant flashes that split asunder the midnight darkness of the heavens.

Mingled with the roll of thunder was the deep, solemn roar of the surf as it broke upon the island beach, and was forced back again upon the reefs of rocks.

"What a fearful night, father!"

"Yes, child, and one that will scatter the timbers of that little schooner along the beach."

"Oh, I hope not! and may God have mercy on poor Milo if he is out in this storm."

"Amen."

And the voice of Ricardo was fervent as he said the word, for he dearly loved the boy whom he had reared from childhood.

"But come, we may be of service; let us to the beach," and hastily donning a large oil-skin coat, and getting one for Ricardo, Theone started for the little harbor, and the Hermit Wrecker followed as rapidly as he could behind her.

CHAPTER III.

THE SUR

The boat was buoyant, and of considerable draught of water, and having a good breadth of beam, was safe in any weather, and of a build that could be easily managed. In a moment the sail was set and reefed, and taking the helm, Theone turned its prow seaward.

The wind drove her rapidly along, but with a cool, steady hand, she guided the light boat over the bounding waves, and safely steered through the rocky channel.

It was a perilous undertaking in daylight, but in the darkness, and with the surf running in with such fury, it was a hazard that most brave men would have refused to take, and yet Theone never faltered in her determination to go to the aid of those who she felt stood in so great need of her services.

On bounded the light boat, and ever and anon, as it was raised high on a towering wave, the glare of incessant lightning would discover the schooner struggling nobly with the waters which sought to engulf her, and a feeling of joy filled Theone's heart as she saw that she was handled by experienced seamen and each moment gradually lessened her danger by beating away from the reefs.

"If she holds that course fifteen minutes longer she is saved," she said to herself, but, even as she spoke, there came to her ears a loud crash, a cry, and the gallant little vessel was dismasted, staggered for an instant upon the waves, and then drifted landward, a helpless wreck upon the ocean.

"My God! she is lost," came in a hard-drawn sign from Theone, as she put her little vessel toward the fated schooner, which was now only two hundred feet distant from her.

"Schooner, ahoy!" came in trumpet tones across the waters, and for the first time Theone noticed another sail, a sloop-rigged vessel, bearing down toward the schooner.

"Stand by and throw me a line as I pass you. It is your only chance," again came in loud tones from the sloop.

"It is Milo; now there is hope for them," almost shrieked Theone, as she put her helm astarboard, that her little boat might not be run down.

The crew of the dismasted schooner felt their danger, and in an instant a long coil of rope was ready to be thrown to the sloop as it passed.

Rapidly it drove on before the winds, the sail closely reefed, and yet bending low in the water.

Standing at her helm was a young man, bare-headed and with both hands firmly grasping the tiller.

No other person was visible on the sloop, and yet she seemed handled with a skill which won praise from those who were in such danger.

On came the sloop, bearing directly toward the schooner as if she would run her down, but when her sharp bowsprit was almost touching her, down went the helm, and the little vessel obediently swung off, while the same clear tone called out:

"Now throw your line."

The order was obeyed, the coil of rope fell upon the deck of the sloop, and springing forward, the young man seized it, and with a rapid turn passed it around the tiller.

All anxiously watched the second that elapsed before it stretched out, for on its strength depended the lives of over a dozen men.

In a moment it tightened, held an instant, and then with a loud snap, parted, and the sloop again dashed on, to leave the schooner to its fate, for the reefs were too near to put about and again try to save the vessel.

"Too bad, too bad; they are doomed now. Hal! what is that?" Theone, as I live, and in the life-boat," said Milo Duncan, for it was indeed he, as he caught sight of the small boat steering directly for the schooner.

"Pass near the schooner, and call to them to jump off; in that way you may save some of them," called Milo, to Theone, but his words were blown back into his teeth by the rushing wind.

But this plan had evidently been determined upon by the "Surf Angel" for, as the wind was blowing from her, Milo heard her hail the schooner, and in a moment after the lightning revealed the forms of men springing into the water.

"By Heaven, I'll try it. That brave girl shall not risk all. Come 'round, my beauty," and the sloop was put about and began to beat back toward the schooner, which was rapidly nearing the rocks.

For an instant it was doubtful whether the sloop would make headway or be wrecked, but her young commander knew the powers of his little craft, and he allowed no effort to go untended to work her out of her perilous position.

And he was successful, for in a short while he approached the schooner, and just then the life-boat passed him, Theone at the helm and half a dozen forms crouched down forward.

"The boat will bear no more, Milo; I must put in. Try and save the rest," and the girl's tones were unmoved by fear, as she called out.

"I will try, Theone."

"Ahoy! do not run us down," came in a loud voice from the water, just ahead of the sloop, as Milo put the helm up a little, and seeing a white object in the ocean, called out, as he threw a rope toward it:

"Catch this rope, if you can."

"Ay, ay," and with the grasp of a man whose life depended upon it, he seized the rope, and by a few almost superhuman exertions, managed to draw himself alongside the sloop.

"Can you take her in?" asked the man, holding up, with one hand, a female form, while with the other he held fast to the rope.

Lashing the tiller hard, Milo seized the form of the woman, and drawing it upon the sloop, laid it down, while he extended a helping hand to the man, who was almost dead with fatigue.

In an instant the two were safe on board the sloop, and turning to look for the schooner, they saw it dashed upon the reefs, while the shrieks of those who had remained upon her, came distinctly to their ears.

"Now it is a chance that we do not go after the schooner," said Milo, and he devoted himself to the management of his sloop.

Seeing that the woman was unconscious, the man turned to Milo, and said:

"You have saved our lives, but there is no time to thank you. Can I aid you, for you have indeed placed your vessel in much danger to serve us?"

Milo made no reply for the moment, and then said, slowly:

"We are drifting into the reefs. The 'Ocean Spray' has stood many a rude storm, but I fear she will go to the bottom in this one."

"I hope it is not as bad as that; but we are indeed rapidly nearing the breakers," answered his companion, anxiously glancing at the rocks upon which the waves were dashing with wild grandeur, and then narrowly watching the sails and movement of the Ocean Spray.

It was, indeed, a time for anxiety, for the mad waters around rose with seething summits high above them, while the roar of the surf upon the reefs, was enough to make the stoutest hearts tremble.

Directly upon their starboard quarter was a long line of breakers, only a few hundred feet away, while two hundred feet ahead was the opening through which the sloop must pass into the channel leading to the island.

Could she bear up so as to reach the entrance between the reefs before being driven into the breakers upon her starboard quarter? was the question which both Milo and his companion were mentally asking themselves.

A half a moment of suspense passed, which seemed an hour to those who watched the little sloop's nearer approach upon the breakers, while she had hardly made any headway toward the channel.

"Too late; I can not make it; so must try my only chance. Look forward, sir, and see by the next flash if you can discover any opening in the breakers," said Milo.

The stranger bounded forward and peered anxiously ahead into the white wall of water, then as the sea was made as bright as day, by the lightning, he called out:

"Directly ahead of us there is a slight break—"

"Keep a bright look-out," and, like a thought, the young commander put his helm hard up, the sloop swung round before the wind, and with the speed of an affrighted deer, bounded on into the very jaws of the breaking waves.

"Now for a friendly flash," said Milo.

A second, and it came; the sloop was headed for the narrow break, and her commander called out:

"Hold on hard, sir, or you are lost!"

A mad spring almost out of the water, a trembling in every timber, torrents of water upon her decks, and the little vessel was battling in the seething caldron.

A struggle, a mighty effort, a bound, and like her name, the Ocean Spray rose upon the top of a mighty wave, and again darted forward upon her course.

She had passed through a small opening in the breakers, her only chance, and where Milo had feared to risk her even in quiet weather.

"We are safe, sir; it is plain sailing through the channel for me now, for father has lit the beacon," said Milo, with a sigh of relief.

"Your courage and coolness has saved us; but it seems fearful to me now, for breakers are all around us," answered the stranger, coming aft from his stand forward by the mast.

"I know the channel well; we are safe now."

"God bless you." The words were soft, but Milo heard them and glanced toward the speaker.

Brought to by the spray, which had dashed in her face as the sloop passed through the breakers, the rescued woman had returned to consciousness in time to hear Milo's last remark, and as she spoke she laid her hand firmly upon his, as he grasped the tiller.

A minute did the young sailor look into the face before him, and by the uncertain light he read its beauty, and as the dark eyes shone upon him, he felt that his danger had been cheaply bought to save the life of such a being.

"I am glad you have recovered; I feared you were injured," he said, slowly.

"No, we owe all to you; I was frightened, for I fear death, and, oh, father, I am so glad you are saved; but, alas for the others!" and the young girl, for she seemed hardly more than eighteen, leaned her head upon the stranger's knee and shuddered.

"Some were saved by the Surf Angel, Miss. I think half a dozen."

"The Surf Angel? That was that daring woman in the small boat?"

"Yes, Miss; Theone, the Surf Angel, she is called; but the yacht has gone to pieces."

"Yes, my beautiful Sea Gull has spread her last sail; but did you see a woman in the Surf Angel's boat, young sir?" said the stranger.

"I could not tell, sir, I passed so quickly."

"Poor Marie, I hope she is saved," sobbed the maiden, and then turning to her father—for the stranger stood in that relationship to her—she asked:

"Did Minton and Leo reach the boat?"

"Yes, Lotta, they were washed from the stern of the schooner, but both reached the boat," answered her father, and then he continued:

"See, we are getting into more quiet water now. You are indeed a daring and skillful pilot, young man."

Milo made no reply; but kept his eyes steadily bent on the beacon Ricardo had lit on the shore. Though he had joined in the conversation, he had narrowly watched his course, and after a short while longer, he steered the Ocean Spray safely into the little harbor, where the life-boat had already arrived under the skillful pilotage of Theone.

CHAPTER IV.

SAVED FROM DEATH.

As the Ocean Spray grounded upon the beach, the maiden who had been rescued from the waves by Milo, and whom the stranger called Lotta, was at once pressed to the heart of a young man, who said:

"Sister, I am so, so glad to see you safe again. I feared you were lost—"

"And I also wish to offer my warmest congratulations upon your safety, Miss Lotta," said another young man, stepping forward and offering his hand.

By the light of the fire which Ricardo had lit, and which was still burning brightly, the two speakers were plainly visible, and both would strike the observer as men of great personal attractions.

The former, who had addressed the maiden as sister, was a brunette, well formed, and with an open, handsome face that was very winning. This was Leo Menken, son of Captain George Menken, and brother of Lotta.

The other, Oregon Minton, was also a handsome man, but of a different style from Leo, for his hair was a light brown, and his eyes blue, and wore a certain disagreeable expression which marred his otherwise fine countenance.

In early life, Captain George Menken, who was a well-preserved man of forty-five, had been a midshipman in the United States

navy, but marrying an heiress, he had resigned his commission and settled down to civil life.

Two children, Leo and Lotta, were the result of his marriage; but Mrs. Menken had died a few years after the birth of the latter, and then the father had devoted his entire love and duty to his children.

Still fond of the sea, he had built him a fine yacht, and being possessed of great wealth, had brought his children up to the enjoyment of every comfort and luxury that money could buy.

At the opening of this story, Leo was twenty-three, and Lotta eighteen; and Captain Menken had promised his daughter that she should accompany him in his southern yachting cruise, and two weeks prior to the wrecking of the Sea Gull, the beautiful yacht had sailed from New York, bound on a two months' voyage.

Lotta was accompanied by her maid, Marie, and as a guest of Captain Menken was Oregon Minton, who for the past year had been paying devoted attention to the fair young mistress of Menken Manor, as the handsome country-seat of Captain Menken was called; but whether the maiden returned the devoted admiration of Oregon Minton, the sequel will show.

The above-mentioned characters, with a crew of a dozen men, completed the number aboard the Sea Gull, whose cruise—anticipative of so much pleasure to all on board—came to such an untimely end upon the Florida Reefs.

Thus I have summed up for the reader's instruction, the history of those who were saved from death by the gallantry and daring of Milo Duncan and the brave Theone.

In answer to the congratulations of her brother and Oregon Minton, Lotta replied:

"The lives of all that were saved are owing to this maiden and this young man, for we would all have been lost had it not been for them."

The two young men turned and gazed upon Milo—for they had already thanked Theone—who had just joined the group, having furled the sails of his sloop.

Milo had matured into a splendid man, and all were struck with his fearless face and manly beauty, as they gazed upon him, and seeing that he was to be thanked for the part he had played in the night's tragic scenes, he stepped forward and said, pleasantly:

"I regret that all of the crew could not have been saved; but it was impossible. I see that father and Theone have gone to the cabin to make preparations to receive you, so we had best go there. Boys—"

turning and speaking to the four seamen who had been saved—"you had best go on board the sloop, as you will find dry clothing and bunks there for you, and can soon make yourselves comfortable, for I will return and look after you soon. Now, allow me to aid you," and offering his hand to Lotta, with the polished manner of one accustomed to society, Milo led the way to the cabin.

Upon arriving there, the party found preparations made to receive them, and ascertaining the names of his guests, Milo presented them to Ricardo, who up to that time had kept in the background, as if to avoid notice.

The cabin was large and conveniently arranged, so that all were soon accommodated. Milo, who had just finished preparing breakfast, Lotta, with the polished manner of one accustomed to society, Milo led the way to the cabin.

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read together nearly every thing readable they could lay their hands upon.

The Bible, Shakspeare, Byron, Scott's works, and many other writers, found places on the shelves of the cabin, and heavy literature and the lightest tales of fiction had all been devoured eagerly by the two young inhabitants, and thus they had learned a great deal of the outside world.

Milo, since his eighteenth year, had made semi-yearly trips to Pensacola, with the debris of wrecked vessels, and upon these excursions he had been enabled to see something of the manners of men in cities.

In the mind of Milo there was an indistinct idea that he had formerly known a different life from the one he had led since his tenth year, but the humdrum of his existence and his exile from the outer world, had gradually caused the thoughts of the past to fade away, and by the time he was twenty, his childhood memories were almost totally obliterated.

He knew that Theone was not his sister, but that much Ricardo had told him, and the maiden was also aware of the fact, but to him she had ever been such, and he felt no other love for her, while she, unconsciously, had made him her hero, and endowed him in her thoughts with all the noble qualities of the heroes in the books she had read.

That she loved him was evident, and with a wild, passionate love, hard to subdue, was also evident, and yet she did not know it herself, nor did Milo suspect it.

Together they had learned to sail the sloop, and man the little skiff and large life-boat, and many a time had they taken the former on a sail around the island when they were mere children of twelve and sixteen years of age.

Theone believed Ricardo to be Leo's father, and if Milo knew to the contrary, he never gave vent to the thought, but called the Hermit Wrecker, as did Theone, by the name of father, for he had taught them to do so from the time they were cast upon the island.

The Hermit Wrecker had even treated them with the greatest kindness and affection, and they dearly loved him; for, though they felt he had had some great sorrow which turned him against the world, and though he was often morose and sad, to them he was always gentle, and they repaid him by every act in their power to please him, and make their days pass pleasantly.

Thus the wrecked party of the Sea Gull found them, and up to that time no shade of trouble had come upon them; but now the bright eyes of Lotta Menken had pierced the heart of Milo, and caused an uneasy pang in the bosom of Theone, who, for the first time in her life, felt the sensation of love, and the tortures of jealousy.

Theone returned to the cabin, and by the time she had finished preparing breakfast, Lotta Menken entered the room, and, walking up to her, kissed her an affectionate good-morning.

It was the first kiss of a stranger Theone had ever felt, and the blood came into her face as she felt the light lips of Lotta upon her cheek; but in a moment she recovered her composure, and returned the greeting of the city maiden.

In a few moments Captain Menken, Leo and Minton returned from the harbor, where they had gone upon arising, to see about the men, and if any thing could be saved from the wrecked yacht.

Around the breakfast-table the whole party soon assembled, and though there was a slight constraint felt by all, the meal passed off pleasantly, the islanders entertaining their guests with an easy grace that surprised those who found them in such an isolated position.

After breakfast, the party adjourned to the beach to hold a council regarding the wreck, and Milo, with Leo and the seamen, made a trip to the Sea Gull, which was thrown high, a crushed mass of timber, upon the reef, and brought from her the clothing of the party, and all other valuables that had not been ruined.

Thus the day passed, and night again fell upon the island-home of the Hermit Wrecker, and his unwelcome guests.

(To be continued.)

Without Mercy:

OR, THREADS OF PURE GOLD.

A TALE OF TWO CONTINENTS.

BY BARTLEY T. CAMPBELL.

AUTHOR OF "IN THE WEB," "OUT IN THE WORLD," "LAURA'S PERIL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FLOATING AND HOPING.

It was three full hours before daylight yet, and the sea was still convulsed, and tossed its foamy wreaths everywhere, drenching poor Dora and her companions with clouds of spray, but hope, which had come with the gleam of that star, made them forget the unpleasantness of their position and nerved them to endure.

The rift in the clouds grew larger and larger, the stars shone out in countless myriads, and the sea, each moment became calmer and calmer, until, at last, the waves lost their foamy crowns, and only yeasty tracks marked where they had been.

Jack Atwell was the first to notice a slight yellowish flush in the east that pale the stars and began to ripen rapidly into dawn, and he cried out:

"Lads, that's daybreak there; we're all right now."

Dora, whose eyes had been searching the sea and sky, clasped her hands together and exclaimed: "Thank God for his kind mercy to us all!"

"Amen!" echoed the boat's crew, reverently, for, all unused as they were to prayer and thankfulness, they felt that this breath of thanks to Him who holds the winds and the waves in the hollow of his hand was timely.

"Here, Mrs. Cuthbert," said Jack Atwell, taking the wet shawl from about her shoulders, "this ain't comfortable now. I've got another one here in the box that will be warmer if not as pretty."

From the provision-chest he brought a great-coat of pilot-cloth, with pearl buttons up the front, and huge lapels on the pockets.

"Put this about your shoulders," he said, tendering it to her.

She looked at his wet coat, which was soaking, and replied: "No, I can't accept your coat while you need it so badly. I can get along well enough without it."

His face flushed, and a blush stole into

his cheeks, as he answered: "Don't take me, please, for a school-girl, ma'm. I'm a sailor of thirty years' experience, and I can stand a little bit of hardship better than a woman—at least I ought to."

"But this is too much—"

"Not more than I would expect Tracy Cuthbert to do for my wife Sue, if she was in a like fix. Now come; let me put this about you, like a good girl."

Refusal being out of the question, Dora stood up, and the kind old sailor folded the garment about her, doubling it over at the throat and pinning it firmly.

"It's not quite your fit," he said, with dry humor, "but it suits the purpose better than a Regent street mantle would, and so is just the thing."

"Yes, it is very comfortable," replied Dora, as she felt herself growing warm beneath it, and so grateful was she for the kindness, so unostentatiously bestowed, that she could scarce restrain her tears from falling, and her tongue from speaking out the gratitude that was in her heart.

Brighter and brighter grew the eastern sky, until all the waves caught the glow, and night, like a vanquished hero, drew off his legions of stars into the far West, where they paled, at last, into nothingness, and were gone.

It is a beautiful sight to witness the sun rise on the sea from the deck of a noisy steamer, as it thunders on its course; it is grand to view it from some island grotto with the hum of the tide in your ears and the white shingle at your feet; but to sit in a silence so deep that it could be almost felt, with nothing to arrest the vision but dappled sky of orange and pink and tender mauve, and a wilderness of waters, apparently all aglow with joy, and reflecting faithfully and vividly the glory of the heavens, is a thing to be remembered long after the common affairs of life have faded from memory's tablets.

Dora, who had ever a keen relish for the beautiful in nature, forgot her danger in the enchantment of the scene, and sat rapt in silent admiration.

Atwell saw this, and rejoiced that any thing could divert her mind from the wretchedness of her situation, and, in order the more fully to engage her thoughts, he said:

"That's a glorious sunrise, ma'm."

"Yes, lovely."

"Such a one, indeed, as even us sailors don't see more than twice in a lifetime. And then, what an atmosphere! Clear as crystal, and balmy as a baby's breath. Ah, this is a wonderful climate."

The mention of the climate brought up the question as to their whereabouts, and Dora asked:

"Where do you think we are, Mr. Atwell?"

"Off the Florida coast," was the reply, "and not far either, for we are on the inside of the Gulf stream. You can tell that by the color and flow of the water."

"What do you think we had better do?" asked Sinclair, one of the men, and who had acted in the capacity of coxswain during the night.

"What do you mean?" asked Atwell.

this for two reasons. In the first place, it will take, as I have already said, two days to reach shore if nothing should operate against us; once there, provisions might, and, doubtless, would, be as hard to obtain as they are here. Besides, Florida is alive with savages, and there are no means of reaching New Orleans unless by foot, which is out of the question as far as the madam is concerned.

"Now, on the other hand," he drew a long breath, which was half a sigh, "a few miles south of us lies the track of all vessels going to Havana and New Orleans. We would be singularly unfortunate if we were to miss a sail between this and tomorrow afternoon. Still, there is no telling; the hurricane that wrecked us may have swept as far east as Hatteras, and, if so, the prospect of being picked up is not particularly brilliant. Now you have the two sides of a gloomy picture; it is for you, gentlemen, to say, however, which horn of the dilemma is the most inviting."

"None of them suits me very well," replied Cooper, "but I say, stick to the sea; we know more about it."

They all agreed to this, and when Dora awoke in the blazing noon she was informed of the resolution adopted. Of course she could not do otherwise than quietly accede, although she would sooner have taken her chances ashore. "The sea is so variable and fickle in its moods, and there is no safety in an open boat," she thought. "But then, these strong men doubtless know better than I do," and so there was no dissent.

A hot, sultry noon was succeeded by a hazy, golden evening, and still no sail appeared to gladden those whose eyes were weary with watching, or to cheer the hearts of those in whom hope had almost died.

Night came, calm and cool, looking down upon the waters with its million of sparkling eyes, and curtaining in the scene with clouds of mellow haze, nothing broke the monotony of the music the waves made as they struck the side of the boat. No one spoke. Each was busy with his own thoughts—thoughts of home and friends, which he had seen for the last time. Thus an hour flew by when Cooper cried out:

"A ship! A ship!"

"Where?" exclaimed all, with an eagerness that was strikingly in contrast with the stolidity that had prevailed but an instant before.

"There, to leeward," and Cooper pointed to a light that gleamed off in a north-easterly direction.

"True enough," said Atwell. "Thank God for this! Here, Sinclair, get out the lamp; we may attract attention."

The lamp was found, but the wick had been thoroughly saturated with water the night previous, and stubbornly refused to burn.

"What's the matter?" asked Atwell.

"It's soaked with water and won't light," was the reply, as Sinclair tossed the lamp back into the chest. "Curse the luck. She'll not see us at all."

"No need of cursing," put in Atwell. "She's gone."

It was true; the light could nowhere be seen. As suddenly as it came it went, and disappointment added its sharpest pang to the painfulness of the situation.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 114.)

The Elk King

A WILD STORY OF MAINE.

BY T. C. HARRAUGH.

Gloomy shades, the precursors of a bitter November night, were gathering around three persons seated by a waning fire in the middle of one of the mighty pine forests of early Maine.

Above the trio towered giant pines, whose leafless branches covered with snow and sleet drooped dismally in their ears, and lent an awful bass to the terribly distinct howl of the wolf. But the men, one of whom was an Indian, whose head-dress was plumed with the feathers of the harfang, paid no attention to the pandemonium of noises to which they could not turn a deaf ear.

It must have been near midnight, for the beautiful constellation of Cygnus had gained the meridian, and, in all its magnificence, was slowly sinking toward the western horizon.

"I wish our hunt was ended," drawled the youngest of the whites, a youth, indeed, in form as well as feature. "Methoto, how far is it to the lodges of the 'Wocks'?" and he turned to the Indian, who sat upon a fallen pine as immobile as a statue.

"Without a word the Androscoggin displayed the two foremost fingers of his arrow hand."

"Two hundred miles yet," groaned the youth, and his words were followed by a sigh which drew a cynical smile to the Indian's lips. "Two hundred miles yet, through these trackless forests of snow, with but an untutored and, perhaps, treacherous red-skin for a guide. Ned Schuyler, were it not for my oath, I would turn back with the dawn. I swore that Endora should be rescued from the accursed 'Wocks,' and that oath shall be kept."

"Our search will terminate in the Norridgewock town," said the second white, assuringly.

"I hope so, Ned, from my heart I do," responded the youth, who was fully ten years his companion's junior. "And there's another creature besides the girl—if creature he be—that I want to see before I'm out of these woods."

"You refer to the Elk King?"

"Yes, but I tell you, Ned, I doubt his existence in flesh and blood. Every thing regarding him I believe a mythological legend, coined by some imaginative red-skin a thousand years since, and handed down to succeeding red generations as gospel."

"Tell Methoto that," said the eldest white, nodding to the Indian.

The young man smiled and shook his head, while the Androscoggin fixed his dark eyes upon the last speaker, and silently pointed to the north, whose cutting blasts penetrated their very vitals.

"I have long believed," continued the young hunter—Jared Howard, by name, "that, in Indian mythology, the Elk King is intended to personate the boreal wind. Civilized nations personify the seasons and their atmospheric attendants. Ourselves, for instance, call one of winter's harbingers, Jack Frost. Yes, I will conclude that the Elk King is the northern wind, which is now freezing the breath on your beard. He's a chilling acquaintance, to say the best we can of the old fellow."

Ned admitted the plausibility of his young

companion's argument, and human silence fell upon the little encampment.

The reader has already been made acquainted with the hunters' quest—to hunt for and rescue the person of beautiful Endora Clark, Jared Howard's betrothed, from the Indians. It was old action, but was now to be accompanied with the strangest of adventures and results.

Having fallen in with a friendly Androscoggin named Methoto, the would-be rescuers learned that the Norridgewocks, dwelling upon the shores of Moosehead Lake, held a young girl in their prison lodge, and, from the chief's description, Jared Howard declared the lone prisoner the woman he loved.

The chief promised to guide the hunters to the main village of the Norridgewocks, although the Maine tribes were at war with the whites, but at peace with each other.

The two hunters never dreamed of treachery on the part of the guide.

When the night mentioned had vanished, the trio resumed their journey through the forest on light snow-shoes. Mile after mile of the wild woods was traversed, and at length they gained a knoll, covered with thick undergrowth, which overlooked the dwellings of the hyperborean tribe. Methoto, the guide, left the hunters among the undergrowth, and entered the "town," promising to return at midnight and lead them to the prisoner whom they sought.

On leaden wings, the cold November day crept over the heads of the twain, and midnight came without bringing Methoto. One by one the cold stars peeped over the edge of the opaque clouds, that crept over the western horizon, and the frigid moon looked down upon the white earth.

The village lay at the very feet of the hunters, who could discern dark figures in the thoroughfares without difficulty.

"Jared, boy, that red-skin has played us false," whispered Ned Schuyler, to his impatient companion an hour after the bewitching time, when restless spirits are supposed to perambulate the spots of their earthly habitation. He's left us here to freeze or to go into the lion's mouth, and, in all probability, get our heads bitten off for one."

The sentence was broken by a terrific whoop, and before the hunters could rise, they found themselves the prisoners of the Norridgewocks!

Methoto, the Androscoggin, was a traitor, for he led the capturing party!

The wily, vergerful savage had guided the whites near two hundred miles through pathless forests and over frozen lakes, for the purpose of betraying them to their bitter enemies!

Ned Schuyler glared like a tiger upon the treacherous guide, and hurled at him words that caused the Indian, despite the helpless situation of the whites, to cover behind a giant ally.

"I'll kill you before I die," the hunter said. "If I don't, then may your red God and mine burn me on the shores of the black river!"

The prisoners were conducted down into the village, and preparations for their immediate execution at the stake quickly commenced.

Not a murmur escaped their lips, and in the cold moonlight, they saw the snow brushed from the fatal stakes that stood in the great square of the Indian town, and each lodge contributed a bundle of fagots for their irrevocable doom.

"Well, Ned," said Howard, calmly, as stalwart braves bound them to the leaden trees. "This is the result of my long tramp, and I'm not going to murmur because my time comes so early in life. But I would like to see Dora just once, and know the fate of John."

"That we'll never know until the great book is opened," responded Schuyler, who referred to his companion's only brother, who had been captured by the savages fifteen years prior to the opening of our story. All attempts to find and rescue the captive had proved futile, and he had long been deemed dead and in heaven, for John Howard was a good boy.

"I hope we won't see the girl," resumed the eldest hunter, after a brief pause; "for she might unman us, and the red-skins would call us squaws. But—What's up down yonder?"

Well might the hunter interrupt himself with the interrogative, for, a short distance from them, at the southern side of the square, savages were crouching in the new-born snow in abject terror, or else fleeing to their respective lodges.

And now the Indians congregated around the prisoners noticed the confusion, and fear, almost paralyzing in its character, drove a dreadful name to their lips.

"Mochemenetoc! Mochemenetoc!"

A moment later "Mochemenetoc" came in sight.

"The Elk King," cried young Howard. "By Jove! it's no fiction!"

Over the glittering surface of the snow, and directly toward the prisoners, came the dreadful apparition of the woods and lakes of early Maine.

Reader, picture in your fertile imagination a gigantic person, *near seven feet in height*, entirely naked to the waist, around which was bound a belt of wolf-skins, that crowned a short skirt of the same material. The head was covered with a wealth of midnight hair, which hung far down its owner's back; his dark eyes shot fiery glances from beneath long lashes that surmounted a beautiful beard, near two feet in length, which streamed over his bare shoulders like the pennons of a vessel. The demon's right hand clutched a firebrand above his head, and the boreal blasts fed the resinous flames and lent them unwonted ire. His left hand held the lines attached to the bits of the beasts upon whose backs his moccasined feet rested.

These animals were two gigantic elks, whose very aspect would frighten the most stout-hearted. They were fully nine feet in height, and their huge antlers had attained an altitude of six feet, and were eight asunder at the top. Nor was this all. Behind them, like cavalry, came thirty other giant elks, snorting and bellowing, while their nostrils were covered with ice.

Such, reader, was the aspect of the terrible Elk King, as he appeared to the two stake-bound whites.

On, on he came, guiding his elks by a series of guttural ejaculations, and ever and anon whirling his torch above his head as though he meant destruction to the entire Norridgewock village.

The savages—the stout-hearted warriors—did not tarry long in the dread demon's presence; but, leaving the prisoners alone, fled, with shrieks of terror, to their wigwams, where they crouched over dying fires, quivering like aspen leaves.

What would the Elk King do?

The interrogative soon found an answer. When directly before the captives a grunt brought the wild cavalcade to a halt; then, from his perch the demon sprung, and snapped the thongs with his torch.

The two hunters stepped forward, free, yet prisoners.

Leaving them with his company, the Elk King flew to the nearest lodge, and applied his torch to the birchen structure. In an instant it was wrapped in flames. The strong counter winds blew the fire all over the thickly-settled ground, and in a very short space of time, the wigwams being dry, the entire town was a mass of seething fire.

While the Elk King was executing his mad work, Ned Schuyler left his companion, and soon returned, leading Endora Clark by the hand. He had rescued her from a living death in the prison lodge.

Suddenly the demon returned to the trio, whose cheeks glowed with the heat that surrounded them.

He caught Endora in his arms and seated her upon the backs of one of the leading elks, and, a moment later, turned to place the hunters in a like position, which work was speedily accomplished.

Endora and her friend, wondering what fate was in store for them, gripped the gigantic antlers, and the madman resumed his station.

A yell from his hairy lips, and the leaders bounded forward, followed by the bellowing pack, glad to escape the now intense heat.

Beyond the sea of fire a shivering tribe of human beings stood and gazed upon the terrible spectacle. And when they turned to save their streams and mountains white with snow, outdistancing the wolves that followed, dashed the demon of the woods and his companions, a strange sight in the sick moon's glare.

He turned into a ravine, the bed of some long waterless river, on either side of which towered banks, two hundred feet in height. A sense of warmth greeted the almost frozen trio, for the winds could not sweep the gorge, and at length the elks halted before the mouth of a cave. Into this the Elk King hurried with his prisoners, who hailed a fire with ejaculations of joy.

Then they surveyed their rescuer in the light of the fire.

Suddenly Jared Howard turned to his companions.

"He's my brother!"

"Impossible, Jared!" cried Schuyler. "I am not mistaken. Behold that scar on his arm. I inflicted a wound in that place, on my brother's arm, more than ten years ago."

The speaker then turned to the Elk King.

"John Howard!"

The strange being started, and pressed his hands against his temples.

"John Howard!"

He bent forward, and indifferent English parted his lips.

"Who speaks?"

"Your brother—Jared Howard."

Then the demon became the man. The transformation was instantaneous. The Elk King was John Howard! Rendered insane by a blow from an Indian, he had wandered into the forests, turned a band of elks, and became their king.

The mentioning of his long-forgotten name hurled insanity from his throne, and when the morning came, the wild cavalcade dashed from the gorge, never to return.

Standing erect upon the leaders, but clad in a dress of skins that protected his entire body, rode John Howard, and at his feet sat the two hunters and Endora.

Hundreds of miles of snow were traversed, and one morning the denizens of a Vermont village were horrified to see the dreadful creature, of whom they had often heard and never believed aught, dash down their center street. They were not assured of their safety, until Jared Howard told them that Elk King was his long lost brother.

A gray-haired couple once more pressed a loved son to their bosoms, and the white forests of Maine lost their terror.

John Howard, led to a green old age, surrounded by children and grandchildren; but he forgot the scenes of the past.

A month after his return to sanity, Jared, his brother, led Endora Clark to the altar, and ere the bloody war between white and red ended, the scalp of Methoto, the treacherous Androscoggin, hung from Ned Schuyler's girdle.

Cut Out.

A TALE OF LOVE AND THE SEA.

BY ROGER STARBUCK.

ASHORE at San Carlos, Chiloe Island, from the surveying bark Plover, Lieutenant Paul Grayson first saw Virginia Claremont. Handsome, ardent, and but twenty-two years of age, Paul, fresh from a six months' cruise on the Spanish Main, felt, to his intense surprise, the soft contrast between this beautiful young woman and the wild associates in whose company he had lately battled waves and tempest.

Every movement of the little, willowy form, attired so as to set off the matchless proportions of the rounded waist and the snow-white throat and arms, every glance of the large, soft dark eyes, every note of the sweet, changeable voice, one moment like the tones of an organ, and the next like tinkling silver, wove round his heart the spell of poetical enchantment.

The face was oval, of a mingled olive and carnation tint, the brow broad, low and white, the eyebrows arched, the lashes long and silken. But had she possessed none of these attractions, Virginia's step—the way she carried that magnificent form—would have redeemed all. Her walk was the very "poetry of motion"—easy, elastic and queen-like, the body rising and falling as gracefully as a wave of the sea.

On her part the young girl was more attracted by Paul than by any man she had ever seen.

She could not look at him without feeling that he brought with him the very romance of the ocean.

His fine, sun-browned face, manly brow, deep-blue eyes, and waves of chestnut hair, somehow seemed to her young imagination to speak, in silent language, of the perils and vicissitudes of the deep, of the roar of winds and waves, of burning suns, howling typhoons, and that mighty giant of the sea—the huge waterspout striding, sweeping far along the wilderness of ocean!

And so these two young people sat side by side, saying little, yet feeling and thinking much.

Thus wrapt in each other, they scarcely heard or saw the rest of the little party, who were making merry around them; for it was a social gathering in honor of Virginia's seventeenth birthday, to which the captain of the Plover and his officers had been invited by the young lady's father, who was an old acquaintance of the former.

At last Lieutenant Bend came and sat on the other side of Virginia.

He was a young man of dark complexion, lively, gay and abounding in "small talk."

He kept up such a rattle of remarks that Virginia, much to Paul's mortification, was soon busily chatting with his shipmate.

His heart sunk like lead, and a gloomy look settled on his face.

As brave as a lion in *peril*, yet, under present circumstances, he felt a crushing consciousness of being unable to compete with Bend, who he knew had the reputation of being a "lady's man."

He therefore rose and walked away, leaving, as it were, the field to his rival.

"I may as well make up my mind to give her up!" he thought. "I can hope for nothing in that quarter."

Days passed, and Paul became gloomier and sadder. Bend was a frequent visitor at Mr. Claremont's, and had even been seen walking about with the young girl.

Aboard the bark it was reported that he and the young girl would soon be, if they were not already, engaged.

At last the Plover sailed, taking with her Virginia and her father, who had decided to go to the United States.

Thus the young woman and Paul Grayson again saw each other.

Sometimes he would notice her watching him, and when their glances met, she would blush and turn aside her head. Then, perchance, Bend would make his appearance and engross her attention.

At times Grayson would have opportunities of conversing with her, but feeling that she loved Bend, he would always terminate these interviews as speedily as politeness would permit.

His sadness told upon him. He became thinner and paler, and his shipmates often rallied him on his loss of gayety.

"But for Bend, she might have been mine," the young man would often say to himself.

A week out, a heavy gale struck the Plover. The wind shrieked madly in the rigging, and the craft tore along on her beam-ends, with the seas flying over her decks.

A crash was heard, and over went the foremast by the board.

"Clear the wreck!" roared the captain. Nearly all the men were aloft, endeavoring to stow at the main the canvas which had been torn from the gaskets.

Bend and Grayson, picking up axes, rushed forward to do the perilous work.

"Be careful! be careful!" screamed the voice of Virginia, who was looking out on deck from the companionway.

"It is I for whom she fears!" hissed Bend, triumphantly, to his shipmate.

Paul had turned a glance toward the young girl, on hearing her exclamation.

Now he bit his lips, his eyes flashing anger.

"I know it," he answered; "and a mean wretch are you to triumph!"

"Cut out, cut out!" cried Bend.

There was no time for words. Stung to the soul though he was by his shipmate's words, yet Paul saw the peril of the bark, dragged down so that she must founder unless something were promptly done.

The two axes rung, both young officers buried to their waists in the sea as they worked.

The spar drifted clear; at the same moment a sea took Bend off his feet!

He caught at a rope, to which he clung with one hand, while he held out the other in mute appeal to Paul.

The latter was entangled in some rigging. He vainly endeavored to extricate himself in time to seize the outstretched hand.

"Curse on you!" howled Bend. "I understand; but you'll not win her if you do let me go!"

Like lightning it then flashed on Paul's mind that Bend, not perceiving his (Paul's) entanglement in the rigging, believed that he purposely refused to grasp his hand so that a rival might be swept forevermore out of his way!

With a superhuman effort he disengaged himself at last from the rigging and rushed to save Bend.

But it was too late; the latter was swept off into the sea!

Determined to save his rival or perish in the attempt, Paul secured a rope round his breast, under the armpits, and permitted the waves to carry him off!

He reached Bend, and seized him firmly.

The men aboard hauled on the rope, and they had nearly pulled the imperiled ones aboard, when the strands snapped, and away they went, swept off by the raging seas!

Paul was a good, and Bend an indifferent, swimmer.

The former contrived to hold on to his nearly senseless companion, until they were washed up against the mast which they had cut clear. Then, by means of some pieces of rope adhering to the deck, Paul contrived to lash first Bend and then himself to the spar.

His tremendous exertions had nearly overpowered him. The sudden knocking of the spar against his head completed the work. Bend had already swooned, and now Paul, too, hung senseless from the spar.

A quarter of an hour later the squall had passed to leeward, and both the castaways were brought aboard in a boat, which had been sent off from the bark.

Paul opened his eyes, to feel a pair of soft arms round his neck and kisses falling thick and fast on his lips and face.

These favors came to him from the woman dearer to him than all the world; from Virginia, who, unable to control herself, was thus giving vent to her feelings, her dark orbs, wild with anxiety and tenderness, looking on his face, while his rival lay near him, still senseless, was entirely unheeded by the beautiful creature.

"He has come to!" she now cried.

"Speak! Where are you hurt?"

"You love me! God be praised!" gasped Paul, staggering to his feet. "I would die a thousand deaths, were it possible, to know this!"

There is little to add.

Bend was at length restored, to soon learn from Mr. Claremont that his daughter and Paul were engaged.

He was at first somewhat chagrined, though less surprised than might have been expected, for he had had much experience with women.

"Though a man of mean spirit, yet he was not ungrateful to Paul for saving his life."

"By Jove!" he exclaimed, grasping his fortunate rival by the hand, "you have cut me out, and you are the first man that ever did! But as it has been done by the man who saved my life, I suppose I can't complain!"

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BY JOE JOT, JR.

Blessings on you, little man,
Whom the poets sing of,
And a perfect storm of prints
Lithographers sling off,
But they ought to dress you up;
Your shirt needs a new one,
And your feet, which need much room,
Haven't a blessed shoe on.

Emblem of Liberty,
Free and untrammelled,
But, when I look at you,
Boy, my heart is pained,
For I'd like to see your hat
Just a little smaller,
Have your feet blacked, any way,
And a paper collar.

Sure the painter fell far short
When he sat and drew you,
And that calm, serene repose
Proves he never knew you;
For I found you with an eye
Blackened in a scuffle,
And a splinter in your heel
Made your walk a shuffle.

And your cheeks of dirt and tan
Poetry would fall on,
And you hadn't any toe
Sound and with the nail on;
And your feet were cut with glass—
Scathed in a wicked scuffle;
And the stinging of the gnats
Multiplied your trouble.

Doubtless some folks think it is
Just to free minds suited,
Unconcernedly to go
Raged and barefooted;
But, I rather seem to me
The worst fun I know of,
For you kick against a stone,
And there goes your toe off!

Or you go along the lane
With a merry whistle,
Which you alter suddenly—
Stepping on a thistle,
Or into the brook you wade
With your feet in breeches,
And on every rock
You will find a lee is.

Blessings on you, little man!
And I think you need 'em;
I don't envy you at all—
Your barefooted freedom,
I don't think it any fun,
Take it altogether,
And while you may trust to luck,
Better trust to I rather.

The Regent's Rival.
A STORY OF FRANCE.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

ONE beautiful moonlight night, in the mellow autumn of the year 1613, two persons walked in the magnificent garden attached to the royal palace, in Paris.

"I do not know," said one, a richly-clad lady of queenly mien; "but, methinks, count, that you are in love. Ah! I am certain of it, now!" she cried, as a flush mounted to the young man's temples. "Come, tell me what sweet creature has stolen your heart."

"Your majesty, I can not refuse the boon you crave," answered the lady's companion, looking up into her face. "The heart of Henri D'Artois is not his own. Long ago he placed it in the keeping of Jeannie D'Albert."

"Ah! I have heard of her," quickly replied the lady. "Praises of her beauty have reached my court, and now, since she has won the heart of my favorite, I would see her."

"Here is her likeness, your majesty—painted by Ducre," and the speaker drew from his bosom a medallion portrait, framed with gold, and glistening with jewels.

Marie De Medicis eagerly snatched it from his hand, and, in the mellow Cynthia's rays, drank in the vision of wondrous beauty, delicately traced upon the ivory. It was a work worthy Ducre's master hand, and a long time did the treacherous regent gaze upon it, lost in the admiration of its loveliness.

"Does it resemble her?" she asked, returning the portrait to its owner.

"Yes, but she is far more beautiful than Ducre's brush can limn. She is fairer than an angel, and as pure!"

"Henri, I must see her. She was never at court?"

"No, your majesty. When last I rode from Chevalreaux Castle, I bade her accompany me, but she said: 'No. I would miss the pure, rejuvenating breeze that sweeps across the channel, the songs of the birds, the music of the fetterless waves—yes, Henri, all these would I miss in Paris.' Ah! your majesty, no bird is freer than Jeannie. She would die at court."

"I would not have her tarry here long," answered the regent. "I would—I must gaze upon her loveliness—that is all. Would she come at my bidding?"

"She would not disobey your majesty," answered the young duke.

"Then to-morrow I summon her hither. By yourself I will send her a letter, and three noble men shall compose your escort."

The duke did not reply. He was proud that Marie De Medicis had praised the loveliness of the woman he loved, and he longed to introduce her at the magnificent court held by that haughty intriguer. Jeannie's beauty would outshine that of the proudest court dame in the realm, and the young duke anticipated her reception in Paris.

Dwelling far from the busy circles of the palace, into whose mysteries he was yet uninitiated, Henri D'Artois knew but little of the treacheries of royalty. Handsome, refined and chivalrous, Marie De Medicis, the plotting regent, saw in him an ornament to her court, and forthwith summoned him thither. Like a loyal subject, he promptly obeyed, and the result was that the royal widow became deeply enamored of him; and when they separated that night in the garden, she swore that Jeannie D'Albert should be swept from her path!

From the maskers that swarmed the palace an hour later, Henri D'Artois, oppressed by the heat that rendered breathing difficult in the great chamber, stole into the garden.

"I will enter this delightful arbor, and bathe my face with the water that flows from the dolphin's mouth," he said, approaching the mouth of a pretty retreat.

He entered the arbor, where silence reigned, and, stripping the mask from his face, scooped the cool water from its stone basin, and bathed his flushed temples.

Suddenly he heard a murmur of voices, and a moment later the doorway was darkened by two forms. The young count found himself in an unpleasant situation, which he was about to make known, when a name fell upon his ears.

"I refer to Jeannie D'Albert."

That sentence, uttered by one of the twin who had just entered the arbor, changed the young man's resolve, and

drove him from the edge of the basin into the deep gloom, where he crouched.

"Let me offer your majesty a drink," said a man's voice, and a goblet struck the water.

The young count now knew that he was very near the regent, and Paul, Count of Navarre.

"To-morrow, Sir Count," resumed the regent, after quaffing the pure liquor in the chased goblet, "I send you upon a long journey."

"Ah, your majesty!"

"You ride to Chevalreaux Castle."

"A long ride, truly," responded Navarre.

"Why go I thither?"

"Listen: this night I learned that Henri D'Artois owns the heart of Jeannie D'Albert," said the beautiful regent, in a lower tone. "He must never call her wife—never! You know I love him, Paul, and to disarm him of all suspicion, I send him, with you, to-morrow, to Chevalreaux, for the ostensible purpose of conducting the lady to court."

"But she must not reach court," said Navarre.

"No; with you I send two men who pass for counts from the southern portion of the realm, and long before you reach court, Jeannie D'Albert will be a corpse. You will give the men great liberty, and should they be arrested for the crime, you will secretly procure their escape. Will you work?"

"Yes, your majesty," said the count. "I hate D'Artois."

A while later the regent and her subject glided from the arbor, and D'Artois stole from the gloom.

"What perfidy!" he cried, gazing after the twain. "I never thought that woman was such a fiend. But ah! Marie De Medicis, God smiling, I will baffle your machinations. Come, rosy morn! I long to ride to Chevalreaux."

To the count daybreak proved a tardy visitor; and when the sun gilded the domes of the royal palace, four horsemen rode from the city.

The two hired assassins were robed as titled personages, and bestrode steeds from the royal stables. D'Artois greeted them

It seemed like steering into the jaws of death, yet D'Artois and the D'Alberts did not shrink from it.

The night chosen for the attempt proved dark, and the artillery of heaven threatened a fearful storm.

The rear walls of Chevalreaux stretched to the water's edge, and over them the retainers lowered the trio, several sailors, and a stanch craft. The channel roared like a thousand demons, but the strong arms of the tars drove the boat through the waves, and at length the prow struck English soil.

"Free!" cried D'Artois, springing from the craft, and then turned to assist Jeannie on shore.

At that moment the voice of Paul of Navarre sounded above the roar of the waves, and the lightning revealed him at the head of a band of men.

"I thought you would attempt this!" he cried. "Men, spare the three; their accursed retainers slay."

"No surrender!" shouted D'Artois, drawing his sword, and throwing himself before the woman he loved. "Upon them, fellows, and brave be he who fells a regent's tool!"

The sailors drew their keen, heavy sabers, and the clash of steel swelled to the dark heavens far above.

The old Count D'Albert fought like a young lion, and for a long time the issue remained in doubt.

D'Artois shielded Jeannie, who stood at the water's edge.

Suddenly a shriek welled from her lips, and Count Henri turned, and confronted Paul of Navarre.

He struck the villain and forced him from his almost victim; again his sword descended; Paul staggered to the water, and before he could recover the ebbing tide caught him in its watery meshes, and, with a shriek, he was borne helpless, wounded and struggling, far out into the Stygian channel.

Hearing their leader's voice no longer, the regent's slaves dispersed, and the conflict was over.

Upon the beach lay the two assassins, and six peasants, while but two sailors aggregated the victor's losses.



THE REGENT'S RIVAL.

The trio reached London in good time, and Jeannie became a star at the dazzling court of James I. They remained in England until the intriguing regent, Marie De Medicis, was driven from France, when they returned to Chevalreaux, which was restored to its primal glory.

Henri D'Artois wedded his idol, the haughty regent's rival, and, in after years, when their hearts were made glad by the faces of happy grandchildren, the Medicis miserably perished in a garret at Cologne.

Border Reminiscences.
A Night in the Concho Hills.

BY RALPH RINGWOOD.

NIGHT came down with threatening aspect, every sign clearly indicating that it would be an unusually rough and stormy one.

Along the northern border a narrow strip of inky cloud lay, and from there we could faintly hear the rumbling of thunder and catch the gleam of an occasional flash of lightning.

Old Grizzly Adams and myself had ridden hard all that day, not of our own choice, but from the fact that a band of Apaches were hanging determinedly on our trail, and, as the sun went down, we found our cattle pretty well knocked up.

The whole adventure had been a reckless, even a desperate one, with about nine chances in ten against us ever getting clear; and now as we saw our mustangs reeling as they drove ahead, and knew the Indians could not be far in our rear, we began to think that even the tenth chance was about "played out."

We had been on a foray into the Apache country, on what Old Grizzly termed "perickler biz," and while transacting it, were discovered by a squaw, who gave the alarm and set the warriors on our trail.

For five days we had succeeded in keeping out of the red-skins' reach, but, as I have said above, the crisis was now rapidly approaching.

We could not go much further. We must find a position from whence a good fight could be made.

"Ef we kin make ther Concho Hills," growled the old trapper, "we kin find a hole whar we'll warm these cusses' blankets fur 'em, see ef we don't!"

"Ef it wun't be dark yer could see the timber from hyar. It are all uv ten mile an'—"

"The horses won't make it then, this night," I cut in, impatiently.

"How ther h— do ye know they won't?" snapped Old Grizzly. "I sez they will, but they won't be wuth much arterwards."

We lapsed into silence, finding employment enough in keeping our mustangs up to their work, lifting them with knee and bit, easing them whenever we could, and steadily plying the long roweled, cruel Mexican spur, without which no ranger feels himself equipped.

My comrade was right. They held up wonderfully, and in the course of an hour we saw the deeper line against the southern horizon, marking the place where timber grew along the crest of the Concho Hills.

We were none too soon, either; for another enemy, almost as troublesome as our pursuers, was about to pounce upon us, and it was indeed fortunate that we had reached cover before the blow fell.

The signs of the Northern had rapidly increased during the last half-hour, and just as we rode into the dense forest that crowned the summit and sides of the higher ground, the storm burst with the fury of a thousand charging squadrons.

"Well, darn my old moccasins ef them ere Apaches don't ketch a leetle perickler sweetnin'!" exclaimed Old Grizzly, as we drew up under the shelter of a cliff, beneath a thick-leaved oak, and turned our faces toward the point whence we had just come.

"Less see," he continued, muttering half to himself. "This ar' the on'y timber in a hundred mile enny which way, an' the imps'll be bounden to kum on hyar, ef 'twur on'y to get ther Northern at ther backs. They'll be hyar in a cuple uv hours, and we ar' got tu git redly fur 'em when they doose kin."

For more than the time named by the trapper the storm raged with the utmost fury, but as the rain began at last to fall, the wind abated, and presently died down to a moderate gale, though the hoarse roar that came from away south told that it was still raging there.

"Hark, lad!" suddenly cried Old Grizzly, as the short, sharp bark of a coyote broke the silence. "Thar they ar'. Ther durned jackasses! tu try enny sech pappose trick es thar on me, as ef I didn't know thar ain't a coyote abroad at this minnit atween hyar an' the Rockies. They've scattered in the Northern, an' ar' signalin' one another so's to git together again."



The bark was repeated, and, after a moment's pause, was answered from two or three different points, and then all was once more silent.

"Will they attack to-night?" I asked, as the trapper stood peering through the darkness.

"They will ef they kin find enny thing to pitch into," was the reply. "Yer see the moon'll be up by ten o'clock, an' yer mind, she ar' at her full—bigger'n a Mexican cart-wheel."

The thought had not struck me before, but I now realized the fact that if we were to make a move at all, it must be made before the hour mentioned, for after that time it would be almost as light as at noonday.

Old Grizzly had been thinking intently for the past few minutes, and I knew he was cogitating some plan of escape from our corner.

"I tell yer, boyee," he said, looking up, "we're in a tight place, no mistake uv ther; but I've got outen wuss ones, an' I doesn't see no good reason why we shen't git outen this. Jess above hyar ther used to be a cliff ther hung plum over ther Concho; a steep rock it ar', and hard to climb. At ther foot, on this side, thar's a good place whar we kin make a bit uv a stand, and then, when hard pushed, we hev ter scramble up, an' take ther lariats. Understand?"

"Well—no, I don't see—"

"Yer're dummer's usual," said Old Grizzly, impatiently. "I mean that we'll make half a dozen uv these barkin' red-skins sick at ther stummock, an' then climb ther cliff, make fast ther lariats, an' drap down into the water. It ar' risky, powerful, fur, ef enny thing wur to break, thar'd be the deuce to pay, but it ar' the on'y way I sees outen this."

"If you say so that way, go it is," was my reply, for I, as did all others who were thrown in the great trapper's company, had learned to trust implicitly in all he said or did.

"We'll hev to leave the mustangs," he said.

"Not hyar! Not hyar!" he continued, hastily, as I began to dismount. "At ther rock. Now, foller close, an' don't make more racket nor a druv uv builers," and, so saying, he turned his horse's head eastward, and slowly rode off through the undergrowth.

It was intensely dark, and the only way was to leave a loose rein and let the animals pick ther own way.

With but little noise, the rain had moistened the earth and leaves most opportunely, we succeeded in reaching the foot of the cliff indicated by the trapper as a halting place, and here we dismounted, and led the horses round behind a large, detached fragment of rock that lay at the base of the steep ascent.

"Ther slope ar' covered hyar an' thar wif stunted chapparal," said the trapper, "an'

mebby we kin re'ch the top, arter the moon gits up, without the varmints a-seen' on us."

"Why not make the attempt at once?" I asked.

"Don't intend to make it at all ef we kin help it," was the reply. "It ain't no joke, boyee, to swing offen that cliff, I tell yer. An' unless we're druv to it, it won't pay to try it. No, we'll stay hyar awhile, an' mebby the Apich'll take a wrong scent. Ef not, an' they pushes us hard, thar'll be time enuff. Git out ther lariats an' let's take a squint at 'em."

Both lariats were brought, and Old Grizzly, taking first one and then the other, tried every inch of their length, by passing the rope around a sapling, and throwing all his vast strength into an effort to break it. They both stood the test without a strand parting, and he pronounced them safe.

Knots were tied every few feet so as to allow of some slight hold in our descent. And then Old Grizzly declared there was nothing more to do but wait.

The point at which we proposed to descend into the river, was the only one within half a dozen miles, up or down, where such a feat was at all practicable.

Sheer from the water's edge the great cliffs rose up to a height of hundreds of feet. Very much as do those upon the Hudson, known as the Palisades, but at the point above-mentioned, the chain made a sudden "dip," so that from the surface of the cliff to the water, the distance did not exceed fifty or sixty feet.

To add us still more, the rocky ledge was covered with a low, sturdy growth of bushes, any one of which would afford the necessary support to which we could make fast our rope-ladder.

For a long time every thing remained quiet—so quiet, indeed, that the uninitiated it would have seemed sheer folly to be thus watching and waiting for a deadly attack.

The moon was now well up and shedding a bright light over the scene.

"They're on the move!" at once exclaimed the trapper. "Keep yer eye peeled—there! See, yander by the big tree wif ther dead top!"

I glanced hastily in the direction indicated, and was just in time to see a dusky figure flit behind the trunk, and, almost instantly, a round object protruded from the opposite side.

It was the Indian's head, and he was evidently the scout in advance of the others, feeling the way.

From the large tree the scout sprang to another and another, drawing nearer each moment until he stood, partly sheltered by a small tree, directly in front of where we lay, and, having become satisfied that we must be further on, he darted forward for the next cover, an oak that stood some ten or fifteen feet distant.

"Ther skunk'll pass—" But the trapper's words were cut short by a sharp crash, that sounded in the complete silence that prevailed, like the crack of a pistol.

One of the mustangs in its restless moments had trodden upon a dry stick, and the work was done—or rather just begun.

The Apache, half-way between the two covers, caught the sound, and, quick as thought, paused and glanced eagerly in our direction.

It was a fatal pause. The trapper saw that discovery was now certain, and, without an instant's hesitation, the rifle was at his face, the trigger pressed, and the ball had crashed through the red-skin's brain.

As Old Grizzly expressed it, "ther opened ther ball," and before the echoes of the purring braves was ringing about our ears.

Three separate times the Apaches charged us with unusual ferocity, but our position was good, and they could not stand the steady rain of balls from our six-shooters.

"This ar' all well enuff, Ralph, my boyee," said Old Grizzly, "but we ar' got ter lile outen this. Day'll break soon, an' ef we're ketched hyar arter ther, why we're meat, thet's all."

"Go ahead," I replied, as I delivered an ineffectual shot at a venturesome Indian.

"Now, then, boyee" whispered the trapper, "take one uv them ropes, an' stick close to the rock es yer go up," and he was off through the bushes like a shadow.

Creeping, crawling, and scrambling, we mounted the steep ascent, and stood, at last, undiscovered, on the edge of the cliff.

The old trapper was on his knees, making the raw-hide rope fast to a stout bush, while I was busy connecting the two ends.

"Hurry, lad! They're fixin' fur another charge!" suddenly exclaimed the trapper, springing to his feet, and hastily strapping his rifle to his back, and fastening the powder-horn upon top of his shaggy cap.

"All ready," I replied, throwing the lariats over the edge.

We waited in breathless silence, and had the satisfaction of hearing a faint splash far below.

It was the rope as it struck the water, and we knew it was amply long.

"Over with yer!" said Old Grizzly.

"When yer tech bottom, let loose an' make fur 'other side. When yer git thar, keep a eye onto the top hyar, fur somethin' mout happen."

Over I went, and sliding down rapidly, I soon felt my feet strike the water. When letting go the rope, on finding that my rifle had not shifted and the lock would be above water, I struck out for the other bank, a distance of not more than twenty yards, and landed under the shadow of a large tree.

Instantly unstrapping my rifle, and seeing that the cap had not dampened, I took position so as to command the crest of the cliff.

Old Grizzly was one-third the way down, and I was beginning to hope for an escape without alarming the Apaches, when suddenly a wild yell from above told that our fight had been discovered, and the next instant a warrior sprang from the undergrowth and rushed forward to the brink of the precipice.

A single glance downward revealed the true state of affairs, and hastily drawing his tomahawk, the Indian stooped over to sever the rope.

The weapon was raised, ready to strike, as my bull caught him fair in the chest, when, with the death-whoop on his lips, he reeled and fell backward out of sight.

By this time Old Grizzly was in the water, and in another moment or two, he stood beside me, under cover.

"Now let's be off," said the trapper; "and ef we can't break the trail in these hills, why we deserve to be ketched."

We did break the trail, and two days afterward were taking the back track—this time as pursuers—at the head of Old John's rangers; and we made that band of Apaches, as the old trapper expressed, "rather uncomfortable," before they shook us off.